

The Christian's Work and Reward.



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 For my yoke is easie & my burthen is light.
 Revel. 2. 10. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give
 thee a crown of life.
 1 Cor. 9. 24. 25. So run that ye may obtain. Every man that
 striveth for mastery is temperate in all things: now they
 do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.

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THE
TRUTH
OF
Christian Religion :

IN SIX BOOKS.
Written in LATIN
BY
HUGO GROTIUS.

AND NOW
Translated into ENGLISH,
WITH THE
Addition of a Seventh Book
Against the present
Roman Church.

By *STMON PATRICK*, D.D.
Now Lord Bishop of Ely.

The Fifth Edition Corrected.

LONDON,
Printed by *J. L.* for *Luke Meredith*, at the Star in
St. Paul's Church-yard, MDCC.

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To the Right Honourable

WILLIAM
EARL of BEDFORD,

Knight of the Most Noble Order
of the GARTER, &c.

My very good Lord and Patron.

My LORD,

I Am so desirous to express my
Thankfulness to your Lordship,
as for all the rest, so especially,
for the last Favour You have done
me, in contributing so freely to the
giving me some ease from that bur-
den which grew too heavy for me ;
that I make bold to prefix Your
Lordship's Name to this Book of a
great Man in another Nation; which
I have Translated, and will live, I be-
lieve,

The Epistle

lieve, as long as Learning and Religion shall last among us.

Whereby your Lordship will see that I have only exchanged, not given over my Labours; and that I Intend not to be less diligent in my station, than when I preached more; but rather study industriously to serve the publick good some other way.

Which that I might promote, I have augmented this Work of *Grotius*, by the Addition of another *Book*: not equal indeed in strength of reasoning, and variety of reading, to the foregoing; but in brevity and perspicuity, I hope, nothing inferior; And, being a building relying, in great part, upon his Foundations, will stand as firm and unshaken, as those which excell it in beauty and neatness of contrivance.

Such

Dedicatory.

Such as it is, I humbly present it to your Lordship; and praying God that the whole Work may have some effect for the reclaiming those that are irreligious; or the settling those who are wavering and doubtful; and the exciting us all to hold fast the Truth, as it is in the Lord Jesus, I remain,

My LORD,

Your Lordship's most Humble,

and obliged Servant,

S. PATRICK.

1871

Jan 1st to Jan 31st

Feb 1st to Feb 28th

Mar 1st to Mar 31st

Apr 1st to Apr 30th

May 1st to May 31st

Jun 1st to Jun 30th

Jul 1st to Jul 31st

Aug 1st to Aug 31st

Sep 1st to Sep 30th

Oct 1st to Oct 31st

Nov 1st to Nov 30th

Dec 1st to Dec 31st

Total

A
PREFACE
GIVING
Some Account
OF THE
AUTHOR,
AND OF
This WORK.

THE Name of this Author hath been so illustrious in these Western parts of the World, that as there are few persons who read Books to whom it is not known ; so there needs no more to recommend this Work, and procure it entertainment, with all those that have heard of him. In which he hath faithfully laid out those great Talents of reason and learning, wherewith God blessed him above most other Men, in the defence of his most holy Religion.
Which

The PREFACE.

Which he hath served very much in other works of his ; but in none more than this : because it is of such general use, and so satisfactory, that it may alone merit those titles of honour, which the Men of learning have bestow'd on him ; though they be as high, as well can be devised.

There is nothing more ordinary in our Selden, than vir Maximus, vir summus, the greatest, the chief of Men ; when he speaks of Grotius. Upon whom Salmasius bestows the Title of ἐξοχώτατος, most excellent ; and as if he were in a rapture when he thought of him, cries out, ὦ θαυμαστότατε, O most admirable, or wonderful, and supereminentiſſime, most supereminent Grotius ! to whom he wished much rather to be like, than to be the most eminent person, for riches and honour, in the whole World. I shall only add the character which Baudius gave of him very early, 1612. in a Scazon he made upon him ; where he thus admires him :

Vir magne, vir mirande, vir sine exemplo.

In English.

*O thou great Man, thou wonderful Man,
A Man without Example.*

*Yet as great a Man as he was, he fell into disgrace in his own Country, and was thrown into
Prison*

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Prison (every body knows) in the Castle of Lupstein. In which strict confinement he meditated many profitable Works, especially in things Sacred. For, during his long Imprisonment, he found by a happy experience (as he writes to Barlaeus a great while after) there was a wonderful power in the holy Doctrines to support the mind, and to keep it erect against all calamities. And therefore for his own solace, in the first place, (as he tells another Friend) he set himself to write this little Book: which he intimates both in the beginning and in the conclusion of it, was then composed, or rather hastily put together, when his Mind was more free than his Body. And therefore (when after several Editions he set it forth with Annotations, 1640.) he calls it in an Epistle to Sarravius, Partum doloris quondam mei, &c. The child of my grief in time past; now a monument of my Thanksgiving to God. And as it was written originally in his own Language; so it was in Verse; that it might be more popular, and more easily committed to memory, by the rudest people: such as Mariners, for whom he chiefly intended it. He tells us as much in the Preface; but we may learn it more fully out of a Letter to him on this subject, from

** Episcopus. Who says, that the oftner he read over those Rythmes, the more he was rapt*

** Inter Epist.
Præf. vir. p.
630.*

both

THE PREFACE.

both into love, and admiration of them. There being nothing in them which was not most necessary to be known; and was able to incline the hardest heart to embrace this holy Religion. For it was hard to determine, he says, whether the Majesty of the things, or the clearness and sweetness of the expressions were most to be commended: the Majesty of the matter not at all hindring the clearness of the Verse, nor its being tyed to Verse, at all diluting or enervating the Majesty of the matter. Such a strife there was between these two, with equal success; that it became a question, whether it was more divine to be able to have a solid and distinct conception in his mind of things so difficult and sublime; or, having conceived them, to cloath them in such comely and perspicuous words; that at the first glance every Reader understood his great sense, though bound up and fettered within the laws of Verse.

Which way I suppose he chose, because it was the ancient manner of delivering the most useful things; as he himself observes in his Prolegomena to Stobæus his Florilegium; Which was written not long after this Book. Where, as a proof of it, he alledges that of Homer; who says, Clytemnestra did not incline to vice, till she had lost him, that was wont to sing to her. For precepts of Wisdom so taught are exceeding charming to the minds of Youth; being

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ing not only more easily imprinted on the memory, but touching the affections more powerfully, and to the very quick, than when otherwise spoken at large. And therefore the publick Laws were in the most ancient times thus written, as Aristotle informs us : and that true Religion might be more easily convey'd into Peoples minds, and fixed there, Apollinarius translated all the Books of Moses (as Sozomen tells us, L. vi. C. 18.) and the rest of the History of the Bible, as far as the reign of Saul, into Heroick verse ; in imitation of Homer's Poems. Suidas says, he put the whole Old Testament into such Verse ; and it is not improbable, for what he did upon the Psalms is still remaining.

If it were my present business, I could trace this way of Instruction down to our own times ; and through our own Nation : in which it hath been very effectual, as the story of Aldelmus sufficiently informs us. Who first brought in the composition of Latin verse among the English, a little before Edward the Confessor's time ; and by his excellent faculty in singing, wrought such wonderful effects upon the People, for the civilizing of their manners, and for their instruction in the duties of Religion : that Lanfrank by his own Authority thought good to make him a Saint.

The

The PREFACE.

The very same charms Grotius hoped would have the same effect upon the rude Seamen of his Country: into whom he desired by his Rythmes, not only to instill a sense of piety; but to enable them to convey it to other Nations, with whom they traded. And it seems this work was so much famed, that it moved the curiosity of a great man in France (into which Grotius went after his wonderful escape, 1621. out of that Prison or rather Sepulchre, as he calls it in a Letter to a Friend, wherein it was first projected) to ask him very often, what the contents of that Book were, which he had written in Dutch, upon this subject of Religion. Whom he satisfied, by translating the sense of it into the Latin Tongue, in the Tear 1628. and addressing it unto that excellent Person, who made the inquiry, viz. Hieronymus Bignonius. Who together with Grotius and Salmasius, the famous Cardinal Richlieu (a notable Judge of Wits) was wont to say, were the only Persons of that Age, whom he lookt upon as arrived to the highest pitch of Learning.*

* Epist. Cl. Sarravii, p. 146.

In which Translation, he tells Sarravius, in a Letter to him that Tear, he should find, if nothing else, that he had at least endeavoured brevity with perspicuity. Which made it so acceptable every where, though no longer in Verse, but now in Prose, that in the Tear, 1632. I find (he tells Cordesius another Learned Man

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Man in France *) it was gone the third time to the Press, with some Additions. But not with

* Epist. ad Gallos, p. 331. 417.

so many, it seems, as some desired; for there were those who wished he would have answered a Book of Bodin's, which seemed to impugn it. This he thought a needless pains, for whatsoever it is, saith he (in a Letter to the same person *) that seems

* Ib. pag. 407.

to shake the foundations I have laid (upon which the Christian Faith relies) I have already obviated it, as far as is necessary to persuade a Reader that is not pertinacious. As for those Opinions which are commonly received in Christianity, but without the exact knowledge of which, we may be Christians; they do not belong to my Argument.

In the same Year also (1632) I find it Translated here into the English Language. Which he himself afterwards takes notice of, in a Letter to Gerard Vossius,

1638. *. Where he tells him, that there were (beside the English) two High Dutch Translations of this Book; one French; and that the

* Inter Epist. præstant. viro- rum, p. 748.

English Embassadour's Chaplain was turning it into Greek; and the Romanists themselves into the Persian Tongue: that by God's blessing it might convert the Mahometans.

None of these could see any Socinianism, (or other dangerous heresie) in it; which some of the

The PREFACE.

*the dulier sort of learned Men, were forward to charge it withal : because he doth not directly prove in this Book the Doctrine of the blessed Trinity. Of which he gives this account in the forenamed Letter ; “ That he heard a great
“ man (who was Franc. Junius, as I take it,)
“ condemn du Plessis, and others for endeavour-
“ ing to prove that Mystery by reasons fetcht
“ from Nature, and by Platonical Testimo-
“ nies (sometimes not very pertinent) which
“ ought not to come into a Disputation with
“ Atheists, Pagans, Jews, and Mahome-
“ tans : who must all be first drawn to believe
“ the Holy Scriptures ; that from thence they
“ may learn such things as cannot be known,
“ but by Divine Revelation.*

This was the Reason he medled not with the Doctrine of the Trinity directly : But if any body doubted of his Orthodoxy in this Point, They might see (he tells him in another Letter) what his Opinion was, in his Poems then newly come forth ; and the larger explication of it he reserved to his Notes.

And for the same cause he did not distinctly treat of some other things ; particularly about the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his Satisfaction : for which omission this Book was blamed, as Sarravius writes to him, by some who had nothing else to do, but to find fault

The PREFACE.

fault with the labours of others. To which Grotius returned such an Answer, as not only gave him, he tells us, most full satisfaction, in those two Points; but enabled him to silence those accusers. He doth not intimate indeed what that reply was; but as to the former Point it is apparent from his Annotations that he believed our Saviour to be indeed GOD of GOD. And that passage in the conclusion of the xxi Section of the fifth Book, concerning the Messias being called in the Holy Scriptures by the Name of GOD and LORD, I should have translated thus—The Messias is called by that August Name of GOD JEHOVAH, and also of LORD, viz. ELOHIM and ADONAI. For so he explains himself, I have since taken notice, in his Annotations; and adds this observation; that the Talmud in Taanith says, that when the time shall come, spoken of xxv. Isa. 8, 9. (i. e. of the Messiah) JEHOVAH shall be shewn, as we say, with the finger: that is, Men shall be able to point others to him, saying, Lo there is JEHOVAH.

And as for the other thing, it is possible his Answer might be to the same purpose with what he writ to * Vossius. In which he tells him, that if any one desired to know (as he had already signified in a Letter, to one that said

* Epist. Præst.
Viror. p. 747.

The PREFACE.

*he was accused of Socinianism) what his opinion was in the business of Christ's satisfaction, even since Crellius had written against him; it would appear plainly enough out of his Translation of the LIII. of Isaiah, in his Disputation against the Jews: (which you may find here in the V. Book, Section 19.) and from hence also, that in the Conclusion of this Work of the Truth of Christian Religion, he doth not interpret those words, Heb. 1. 13. *καὶ δαετοὺν ποιοῦμεν*, in the Present Tense, making a purgation, or expiating our sins, as Socinus doth; but in the past time, *expiatis peccatis nostris*, having expiated, or purged away our sins. How they come to be otherwise translated in his Annotations on that place, put forth since his death, I can give no account.*

And in like manner, I suppose, he satisfied another doubt about a passage in this Book, which Sarrauius desired him to resolve; though I cannot find his Answer to it: For he gives a punctual Answer afterward to a Question propounded by a Minister of Rouen; who askt him, where he had that of Rabbi Nechumias, who made that publick Declaration (mentioned in the Fifth Book, Sect. 14.) concerning the appearing of Christ, 50 Years before our Saviour; to this effect: That the time which Daniel had prefixed for the coming

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coming of the *Messiah*, could not be prolonged above those Fifty Years. *Which he tells Sarravius, * is to be found in the Talmud, in the Title Sanhedrin (as he remembred;) and he thought also in Abenada upon Daniel.*

* Epist. Claud.
Sarrav. p. 52.

*This was in the Tear 1640. when he first put out this Book with Annotations; containing the Testimonies of those Authors, in words at length; whom he had alledged: but had forgotten, it seems, to set down where he had this passage of Rabbi Nechumias. Nor is it now to be found among the Annotations; and therefore they that next Print the Book so enlarged, will do well to supply it from hence, out of Sarravius; who was the first Person * to whom he made a present of it after it came out, with the Addition of Testimonies; desiring to be admonished by him, if, in the midst of much business, any thing had escaped him, which was less exactly spoken; while he studied to serve the Christian cause.*

* Epist. ad Gal.
los, p. 45c.

To which he replies immediately, " That as he could not but esteem it a very great honour to be acknowledged and beloved by the Coryphaeus of all Learning, both Sacred and Profane; so he esteemed this as a Golden Book, wherein Grotius had joined

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*" Learning together with Piety; consulting,
 " that is, the Disease of the Age, to whose Pa-
 " late Piety (of it self) had little savour.
 " And as for the immense collection of Testi-
 " monies then added, he made it appear by
 " them, that in all his studies the glory of
 " Christ had alway been before his eyes; his
 " holy diligence and industry having disco-
 " vered so many, and such things, which had
 " escaped the sagacious eyes of others.*

*And not long after he propounded some
 doubts, according to his own desire; and men-
 tioned some exceptions, (as was noted before)
 which some, who had no good will to him, took
 at this Golden Book, as he again calls it :
 And, notwithstanding the harsh censures of
 some Learned Men, this excellent Person still
 persisted in his high esteem of the worth of this
 Author; and believed all unprejudiced Men
 would ever look upon him with great Venera-
 tion. So he tells Salmasius five*

** Epist. Claud.
 Sarrau. p. 146.*

*Tears after *, (1645.) Whe-
 ther they will or no, Grotius
 will alway be accounted a great Man
 by you and me, and by all that love E-
 quity and Goodness; for he is full of envy,
 who denies due praises to such an Hero.
 And a little while after, bearing of the news*

** Ibid. p. 171.*

*of his death, he most sadly
 bewails it, * as the extinction
 of*

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of the bright Star of that Age ; whose Name would be great as long as either Books or Learning were in honour. And while he had breath, he saith, he would glory in this, that he once had familiar acquaintance with a Man, who was re & nomine Magnus ; no less great in Deed, than his Name imported.

*This affection he seems to have carried with him, to his Grave ; and honoured his Memory at such a rate, that in the Year 1648. he still says, he was proud of the Friendship of that Man ; by whom to have been known, was glorious ; and who would be revered in all future Ages. In conclusion, he calls him that Blessed Soul ; even after he himself had pronounced this sentence against Grotius *, that he favoured the Papists ; and not* * Ibid. p. 196.
only yielded too much to them in his later Writings, but expressed too much disaffection to the Reformed in those Countries. All this he candidly passed over with this Censure ; * He is the best
Man, who hath fewest * Ibid. p. 146.
faults ; for there is no body to be found without some.

And the same favourable judgment, I suppose, all serious and considering Men will pass

The P R E F A C E.

upon him now ; and not be hindred by any prejudices, which may have been taken up against him among our selves, from reaping that benefit which they may receive by reading this excellent Book. Which I present again to the view of the English World, and have, in a manner, made a new Translation of it; the former, which came out near Fifty Tears ago, being so defective, that there were few Paragraphs in it, which stood not in need of some amendment ; and in a great number, the sence was quite mistaken.

Who the Translator was, I am ignorant ; but it is certain, he either did not understand the Latin Tongue, or did not attend to what he was about ; as appears by innumerable Instances : But one may suffice, in the Third Book, Sect. 3. where he translates altera Petri, the one Epistle of Peter. Besides, there is plain Arianism in his Translation, (Book V. Sect. 21.) for he says, the Son was not uncreate, as the Father is ; when in Grotius the words are, the Son is not ingenitus, unbegotten, as the Father is.

Tet where the Translation was passable, I have let it go as it was ; that I might not seem to be too curious a Censurer of other Mens labours. And I have added such passages as were not there ; the Book it self having

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ving been enlarged by Grotius, since that old English Translation. I know not how necessary it might be at that time, when it was first put into our Language; but now I think nothing can be more: And to make it of larger use, I have added also a Seventh Book of my own; in which, out of those Principles chiefly which Grotius builds upon in his Six Books, I have shewn that Christian Religion hath suffered very much by the Church of Rome; and that we need not go thither to be assured of the Truth of that Religion, but shall be better informed in our own Church, by the Holy Scriptures, and such Works as these.

I have not quoted all my Authors, no more than Grotius did in the first Editions of his Book: And it would have made the Work also too long (I thought) to translate his Testimonies, and add the like of my own. Nor would it have been so useful to common Readers; who do but perplex themselves in abundance of Quotations, and must, after all, believe that we report them truly; and therefore may as well believe us when we say, that they are ready at hand to attest every thing which is here affirmed from their Authority.

Since the finishing of this little Labour, I was informed by a Friend, that Mr. Clement Barksdale had translated part of this Work

The P R E F A C E.

into English ; and upon search , I found the three first Books, among some other Discourses, Printed 1669. And I am told further by another Friend, that he hath lately added (though I have not seen it) the three last Books. Which if I had known sooner, it might have saved me, I believe, most, if not all, of the pains I have taken. But I was perfectly ignorant of it ; as I perceive he was of any former Translation, before his. For in that Edition of his Discourses, where he hath added the Third Book of this Work, concerning the Authority of the Scriptures, he saith, it had not been till then in English.

But it will do no hurt, though the same good thing be reached out to us by more hands than one : And so I leave it to God's Blessing, upon the Reader's serious perusal.

S. P.

A
Christian PRAYER
FOR THE
ADVERSARIES
OF
True Religion.

O Merciful GOD, who hast made all Men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all *Jews, Turks, Infidels* and Hereticks; and take from them all Ignorance, hardness of Heart, and contempt of thy Word: And so
fetch

A Christian Prayer, &c.

fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy Flock, that they may be saved among the Remnant of the true *Israelites*, and be made one Fold, under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the Holy Spirit, one GOD, World without end.
Amen.

To

TO the HONOURABLE
Hieronymus Bignonius,
THE
KING'S ADVOCATE
IN THE
Supreme Court of *P A R I S.*

SIR,

YOU are wont very often to ask me, who am sensible how highly you have deserved of your Country, of Learning, and (if you will permit me to add that) of me also, what the Argument of those Books is, which I wrote in my own Country Language, in the behalf of Christian Religion. Nor do I wonder you should make such a Question; for you who have read, and that with so great judgment, all that is worth the reading, cannot be ignorant what pains hath been already taken in
the

A LETTER

this matter ; by Raymundus Sebundus, with Philosophical subtilty ; by Ludovicus Vives, with variety of Dialogues ; but especially by your Mornay, with no less Learning than Eloquence. For which cause it may seem more profitable to translate some of them into the Vulgar Tongue, than to begin a new Work upon this Subject.

But what other Men will judge of this matter I know not ; my hope is, that before you, Sir, who are so fair and easie a Judge, I may be absolved if I say, that having read not only those Authors, but what the Jews have written for the old Judaical, and Christians for our Religion, I thought good also to use my own judgment, such as it is ; and to allow that freedom to my mind, which, when I wrote it, was denied to my body : For I thought that Truth was not to be contended for, but only with truth ; and with such truth also as I approved in my own mind ; knowing it would be but a vain labour to go about to persuade others of that which I had not first persuaded my self to believe.

Omitting therefore such Arguments as seemed to me to have little weight in them, and the Authority of such Books as I either knew or suspected to be counterfeit, I selected those, both out of the ancient and modern times, which appeared to me to have the greatest force in them. And what things I fully assented

to Hieronymus Bignonius.

assented unto, those I both cast into an orderly method, and expressed in as popular a manner as I could invent; and likewise included in Verse, that they might be the better committed to memory.

For my intention was to do some good service hereby to all my Country-men, especially to Sea-faring Men; that in their long Voyages, wherein they have nothing to do, they might lay out their time, and employ it; rather than, as too many do, lose and mis-spense it.

Wherefore, taking my rise from the commendation of our Nation, which for diligent skill in Navigation much excels the rest, I stirred them up to use this Art as a Divine benefit; not merely for their own gain, but for the propagation of the true, that is, the Christian Religion: For they would neither want matter for such endeavours, when in their long Voyages they commonly met either Pagans, as in China and Guinea; or with Mahometans, as under the Turkish Empire, the Persian, and the Africans; or with Jews, who, as they are now professed enemies of Christians, so are dispersed through the greatest part of the World: And there would always be store of impious men, who are ready, upon occasion, to vent the poyson which for fear they keep concealed. Against which mischiefs I wished that our Country-men might be sufficiently armed; and that they who are more
ingenious

A LETTER, &c.

ingenious than others, would use their utmost endeavours to confute Errours; and the rest would, at least, be so cautious, as not to be overcome by them.

And that I might shew Religion is no frivolous thing, I begin, in the first Book, at the ground or foundation thereof; which is, that there is a God. Now that I attempt to prove after this manner.

The

The FIRST Book
OF THE
T R U T H
OF
Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

That there is a G O D.

TH A T there are some things which had a *beginning*, is clear to common sense, and by the confession of all : Howbeit, those things were not causes to themselves of their own being.

For that which is not, cannot produce any thing, neither had it power to be before it was ; therefore it follows, that the said things had their beginning from some other thing, different from themselves : Which may be averred, not only of such things as now we see, or ever have beheld ; but of such also as gave original unto these ; and so upward, until we come to some *prime cause*, which never began to be, and which

(as

(as we say) hath its existence *by necessity*, and not after any *contingent* manner : And this, whatever it be, (whereof by and by we shall speak) is *that* which is meant by *Divine Power*, or *Godhead*.

Another reason to prove that *there is some such Divine Majesty*, is taken from the most manifest consent of all Nations ; such I mean as have not utterly lost the light of reason and good manners, and become altogether wild and savage. For since those things, which proceed from Man's pleasure and appointment, are neither the same among all Men, and are often subject to change ; and yet there is no place where this notion is not found, and it is not changed by the alterations of times, (as *Aristotle* himself notes, who was not over-credulous in such matters) we must assign some cause of it, that extends it self to all Mankind : Which can be no other than either an Oracle of God himself, or a Tradition derived from the first Parents of Mankind. The former of which, if we admit, the thing in question is granted : And if we affirm the latter, there can no good reason be given, why we should believe those first Parents did deliver a falshood to all their Posterity, in a matter of the greatest moment.

Moreover, whether we consider those *parts of the World* which were anciently known, or those that are lately found out, wheresoever there is (as we have said) any *relicks* of humanity, there certainly is *this truth* acknowledged, as well by such *Heathens* as have any ingenuity and wisdom, as also by those that are of a more dull and stupid disposition :

disposition : The former whereof questionless could not all be deceived ; neither is it likely that these later so silly and simple should any way devise how to *deceive* one another.

Neither let any Man here object, that there have been some in many Ages, who have either believed there is no God ; or professed they did not believe it : For both the small number of them, and the universal rejection of their opinion, as soon as their Arguments were understood, make it appear, that it did not proceed from the use of right reason, which is common to all Men ; but either from the Affectation of novelty (such as was in him that would needs maintain the Snow to be black) or from a corrupt mind, like as Meats to a distempered Palate, taste quite otherwise than indeed they are. Especially since both History and other Writings teach us, that the honestest any man was, the more diligently did he preserve the knowledge of God. And further, that this departure from so anciently received opinion, chiefly proceeds from the naughty disposition of those, whose interest it is that there should be no God ; that is, no Judge of humane actions, appears even from hence : that whatsoever they put in the room thereof : whether a succession of several kinds of things, without any beginning ; or a concourse of atomes ; or any thing else whatsoever ; it hath not less, if not greater, difficulties, nor is at all more credible (as is manifest to any Man, that vouchsafes an ordinary attention to the matter) than that opinion which is already received.

As for that which some pretend, that they cannot believe there is a God, because they cannot

see him ; if they see any thing, they cannot but see how unworthy this thought is of a Man, who doth but believe that he hath a mind, which he never saw, no more than he doth the Essence of God. Nor because we cannot comprehend the Nature of God by our understanding, ought we therefore to deny there is any such Nature? For this is proper to every inferiour Creature, not to be able to comprehend those Beings which are superiour, and more excellent than it self. The Beasts cannot conceive what Man is, much less can they know after what manner Men institute and govern Common-wealths, measure the Stars, and sail upon the Sea ; for all these things are out of their reach. From which very thing, Man, who is raised, and that not of himself, by the nobility of his nature, above the Beasts, ought to infer ; That that Being, by whom he is made superiour to Beasts, is no less superiour to him, than he himself to the Beasts ; and that therefore there is some Nature, which, as far more excellent, transcends his comprehension.

SECT. II.

That there is but One GOD.

WE having evinced that *there is a God*, it follows that we speak of his Attributes. The first whereof is this, that *There are not more Gods, but one God*. This is gathered from hence, that God (as was said before) is what He is necessarily, and of Himself. Now whatsoever is necessarily, or of it self, is considered not in its general

general notion, but as actually in being. Now things actually in being are particular. But if you suppose more Gods, you cannot find a reason in each of them, why they should necessarily be; nor why two rather than three, or ten rather than five should be believed.

Besides, the multiplication of those particular things that are of the same nature, proceeds from the *exuberancy* and fruitfulness of the *causes* whence such things more or less are generated: but of *God* there is neither beginning nor any *cause*.

Furthermore, in all particular things, there are certain, special, and particular *properties*, whereby the same things are severally distinguished: now to make such a distinction in *God*, is altogether needless, since that he is *most necessary* and *simple* by nature. Neither can any Man perceive any signs or tokens of the *plurality* of *Gods*. For this *universal Sphere* or circumference which we behold, makes up but one compleat World, wherein there is one most beautiful and glorious *Sun*: Likewise in every Man, the little World, there is but one special governing part, to wit, *his soul or mind*. Besides, if we should suppose two Gods, or more, freely acting and willing, what they please, they might will contrary things; and then one of them might be hindred by the other, from effecting what he had a mind to have done. But to say that God can be hindred in what He designs, is unworthy of his Majesty.

S E C T. III.

That all Perfection is in G O D.

THat we may know the rest of God's Attributes, let it be considered; that whatsoever is wont to be understood by the Name of *Perfection* (which word we must be content to use, since our Language furnishes us with no better, to express the Greek *Τελεώτης*) is in God, may be thus proved. What perfection soever there is in things, it either had a beginning; or had no beginning. That which had no beginning, is the perfection of God: and that which had a beginning, of necessity must have something, that gave it such beginning. And since nothing among all the things that have a being, is made of nothing; it follows that those perfections which appear to be in any effects were the reason why *the cause* thereof could produce any thing accordingly; and consequently are all in the *first cause*. Neither must it be here imagined, that the *first cause* can afterward be deprived of its *perfection*; either by some other thing different from it self, because that which is eternal hath no dependance upon any other thing, neither can be liable and subject unto their actions; or of it self, because every Nature desires its own perfection.

*With some reasoning it may be
shown that God is perfect and
that no other power of reasoning is required
to observe this.*

S E C T.

SECT. IV.

G O D is infinite.

AND we may add further, that these *perfections* which are in *God*, are in him after an eminent and *infinite* manner; for the nature of every thing is finite and limited, either for that the cause whence it proceeded hath communicated such a measure or degree of *existence*, and no more thereunto, or for that the same nature was not capable of any further *perfection*; Now there is no nature that doth communicate any thing of its own unto *God*, neither is he capable of ought that any other thing can impart; being (as before we said) altogether absolute, and *necessary* of himself.

SECT. V.

That G O D is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and absolutely good.

A Gain, forasmuch as all things that have *life*, are said to be more *perfect* than those without *life*; and those which have power of acting, than those which want it; and those endued with *understanding* superiour to such creatures as lack it; and those which are *good*, better than those that come short in *goodness*; it followeth from that which hath been spoken, that *all those attributes* are in *God*, and that after an in-

finite manner. Therefore is he *infinite* in life, that is, *eternal*; *infinite* in power, that is, *omnipotent*; So likewise is he *omniscient*, and altogether good without any exception.

SECT VI.

That GOD is the Author and Cause of all things.

Furthermore, it follows from that which hath been spoken, that what things soever *subsist*, the same have the *original* of their *being from God*: for we have proved, that that which is *necessary* of it self, can be but *one*; whence we collect, that all other things besides this had their *original* from somewhat different from themselves.

Now such things as have their *beginning* from another, we have seen before how that either in themselves, or in their causes, they proceeded from *him* which had no beginning, that is, *from God*.

Neither is this manifest by *reason* only, but also after some sort by very sense: for if we consider the wonderful frame and fashion of *Man's body*, both within and without, and how that each part and parcel thereof hath its *proper use* without the study or industry of his Parents, and yet with such art that the most accomplished Philosophers and Physicians could never sufficiently admire it; this verily shews the Author of Nature to be a most excellent Mind: concerning which matter *Galen* hath written well, especially where he speaks of the use of the *eye*, and of the *hand*.

hand. Yea more, the very bodies of mute *beasts* do testifie the same: for their *parts* are not framed and composed by the power and vertue of the matter whereof they consist, but by some superiour and higher cause, destinating them to a certain end.

Neither is this plain by *man* and *beasts* alone, but also by *plants* and *herbs*, as hath accurately been observed by some *Philosophers*. This further is excellently noted by *Strabo*, concerning the *situation* of the waters, which, if we consider the quality of their matter, ought to be placed in the *middle* between the earth and the air, whereas they are now included and dispersed within the earth, to the end they might be no hindrance, either to the fruitfulness of the ground, or to the life of Man. Now to propose *that*, or any other *end*, to any action, is the peculiar property of an *understanding nature*. Neither are all things only ordained for their peculiar *ends*, but also for the good and benefit of the whole *Universe*, as appears particularly in the water but now mentioned, which against its own proper nature is moved upward, lest by the interposition of a vacuity there should be a gap in the *Universe*: which is so framed, that by the continued cohesion of its parts, it sustains and upholds it self. Now it cannot possibly be, that this common end should be thus intended, together with an inclination in things thereunto, but by the power and purpose of some *intelligent nature*, whereunto the whole *Universe* is in subjection. Moreover amongst the *Beasts* there are certain actions observed to be so regular and orderly done, that it is manifest enough they proceed from some kind of *reason*; as is plain in *Pismires*

and especially in *Bees*, and likewise in other creatures, which before they make any trial, do naturally eschew such things as are hurtful, and seek after such things as are profitable for them. Now that this instinct or inclination of finding and judging things, is not in them by their own power, it is clear; for that they do always operate after the same manner, neither have they any vertue or efficacy at all to the doing other things which are no more weighty: wherefore they must needs receive their power from some *reasonable external Agent*, which directs them or imprints in them such efficacy as they have, and this *reasonable and intelligent Agent*, is no other than God himself.

In the next place consider we the *Stars* of Heaven, and amongst the rest, as most eminent, the *Sun* and the *Moon*, both which for the making the earth fruitful, and preserving living Creatures in their health and vigour, do so seasonably perform their course of motion, that a better cannot be devised. For when otherwise their motion through the *Æquator* had been much more simple, we see that they have another Motion by an *oblique Circle*, to the end, the benefit of their favourable aspects might be communicated to more parts of the Earth.

Now as the Earth is ordained for the use and benefit of living Creatures, so are all terrestrial things appointed chiefly for the service of Man, who by his wit and reason, can subdue the most furious creature among them; whence the very *Stoicks* did collect, that the World was made for Man's sake.

Howbeit, since it exceeds the sphere of humane power, to bring the heavenly bodies in subjection

jection to him; neither is it to be imagined that they will ever submit themselves to man of their own accord; it follows therefore that there is some *superiour mind* or *spirit*, by whose sole appointment those fair and glorious bodies do perpetual service unto man, though he be placed far below them; which *same mind* is no other than the framer of the Stars, even the *Maker* of the whole World. Also the motions of these Stars which are said to be Excentrical and Epicyclical (*i. e.* in a Circle within the Orb of another Star) do plainly shew, not the power of matter, but the appointment of a free Agent. The same do the Positions of the Stars testifie, some in this part, others in the other part of Heaven: together with the so unequal form of the Earth, and of the Seas. Nor can we referr it to any thing else, that the Stars move this, rather than another way. The most perfect form also and figure of the World, *viz.* roundness; as also the parts thereof, shut up as it were in the bosom of the heavens, and disposed with a marvellous order, do all expressly declare, that they were not tumbled together, or conjoined as they are *by chance*, but wisely ordained by *such an understanding* as is endued with super-eminent excellency. For what Ninny is there so sottish, as to expect any thing so accurate and exact from chance? He might as well believe that Stones and Timber got casually together, and put themselves into the form of a House: or that out of Letters shuffled carelessly as it happened, there came forth an excellent Poem. A thing so unlikely, that even a few *Geometrical figures* espied on the *Sea-shore*, gave the beholder just ground to argue, that some *man* had been there; it being evident enough

enough that such things could not proceed from *meer chance*.

Furthermore, that *Mankind* was not from all Eternity, but at a certain time had a *common beginning*, may be manifested among other things from the progress of *Arts and Sciences*; yea, by the *very ground* whereupon we tread, which was anciently rude and untill'd, but afterward became possessed with Inhabitants; which also the *Language* spoken in *Islands*, derived from adjacent Countries, doth witness. The same is apparent by *certain ordinances*, so generally received amongst Men, that the *institution* thereof may not be thought to have proceeded so much from the *instinct of nature*, or *evident deductions of reason*, as from *perpetual and constant tradition*, scarce interrupted in a few places, either by the *malice or misery* of Man: such was that of killing Beasts in Sacrifice, used in former times; and such also are now the modesty and shamefastness about venereal things, the solemnities of Marriages, and the abhorrence of all incestuous Embraces.

SECT. VII.

Answer to that Objection concerning the cause of Evil.

NEITHER ought we to doubt of that which hath been spoken, because we see *many evil things come to pass*; the source and cause whereof cannot be ascribed unto God, who (as before hath been shewn) is *good*, after the most perfect

perfect and absolute degree of *Goodness*. For when we said that *God* was the author and cause of all things, we added withal, that he was the cause of such things as *really do subsist*: And no absurdity (that I see) will follow, if we affirm, that those things which have true and real existence, are the causes of some certain accidents, as namely of actions, or the like. The Almighty (we know) created both Man, and those more sublime Minds, the Angels, endued with *liberty of action*; which *liberty* in it self is not sinful, yet by its power some sins may be committed. Now to make *God* the author of these evils, which are morally evil, is no better than *blasphemy*: howbeit there are other kind of evils, so called, because they afflict some person with *grief* or *loss*; and these we may affirm to be inflicted by *God* for the reformation and amendment of some Sinner, or for punishment answerable to an offence, which to say is no impiety, since that such evils have nothing in them contrary to *goodness*, but rather they proceed from *goodness* it self; like a bitter *poison* from a good *Physician*.

S E C T. VIII.

*Against the Opinion of two Principles
or Causes of things.*

H E R E, by the way, it may be noted, that the opinion of those Men is to be abandoned and avoided, which make *two efficient causes*, the one *good*, and the other *evil*: for from two Principles opposite to each other, there may follow
the

the ruine and destruction, but in no wise a well ordered composition of things. Neither is this to pass for truth, to wit, that as there is something *good* of it self, so likewise there must needs be something absolutely *evil* in it self; seeing that *evil* is a certain *defect*, which cannot be but in a thing that hath *existence*, which very having of *existence*, or being is *good*.

S E C T. IX.

That G O D doth govern the whole World.

Moreover that this whole *Universe* is governed by the *providence of God*, is evident, for that not only *men*, which have right reason and understanding, but also the *fowls*, and *beasts* both wild and tame, which have in them some thing correspondent to reason, do bear a *kind* of providence, or *respectful care* over the *issue* which they bring forth. Which *perfection*, since it is a part of goodness, must needs be attributed to *God*; and so much the rather, because he is both *omniscient* and *omnipotent*, so that he can no way be ignorant of such things as are done, or to be done; and can easily direct and order *the same* as he pleaseth. To which also belongs that which we have spoken before, concerning the *moving* of things contrary to their proper nature, to serve an Universal end.

S E C T.

S E C T. X.

Tea, Sublunary things.

AND that they are much out of the way, who shut up this providence within the celestial Orbs, and would have it descend no lower than the Moon, is apparent; both from the reason now mentioned, whose force extends to all created things; and also from hence, that the course of the Stars, as the best Philosophers acknowledge, and experience sufficiently demonstrates, are ordained for the use of Man. Now it stands but with equity that that Creature should be *more regarded* for whose sake another is ordained, than that which is appointed for anothers use.

Neither are they less erroneous that say, this providence is extended unto *universal* things only, and not to *particulars*; for if they will have God to be ignorant of particular things as some of them have professed, then verily God could not understand himself; neither should he be infinite in knowledge, as we have proved him before to be, if it be not extended unto every thing. But then, if God do know these things, why can he not also have care of them? especially since that particulars, as they are particulars, are appointed for some certain end, both special and general: And the *common essences* of things, which by the confession of the said Authors are preserved by God, cannot subsist but in their *singulars*; So that if these *singulars*, being forsaken by Divine Providence, may perish, then may the whole kinds likewise.

S E C T.

SECT. XI.

This is further proved by the preservation of Empires.

ANother forcible Argument of *Divine Providence*, particularly over humane affairs, both Philosophers and Historians acknowledge in the *preservation of Common-wealths*: first in *general*, for that wheresoever the course and order of ruling and obeying is once admitted, the same always continues there: Then also, oftentimes in *particular*, it is evident by the long continuation of this or that very form of government thorow many Ages, as of a *Monarchy* with the *Affyrians, Egyptians, and Franks*; of an *Aristocracy* with the *Venetians*, and the like. For although Man's wisdom and policy have some stroke in point of government; yet if we rightly consider the multitude of wicked men, and the harms that may proceed from without, and the changes that are naturally incident to humane affairs, it may seem impossible for any State so long to subsist, unless it were upheld by a *constant particular care*, and by the *power of a Divine hand*. Which is more evidently seen, when it pleases God to change Empires, and translate them from one to another. For to those Instruments, whom he thinks good to use in that business, as a thing destined by himself (suppose *Cyrus, Alexander, Caesar the Dictator, Gengi* among the *Tartars, Namcaa* among the *Chineses*) all things whatsoever, even those which do not depend on humane Prudence, succeed more prosperously

sperously, beyond their own wishes, that is suitable to the usual variety in humane casualties. Which strange correspondence, and combination, or conspiring, as we may call it, of events to a certain end, is a manifest token of a provident direction. Like as at Dice, if a Man now and then throw a lucky cast, which wins all, it may be no more than a chance: but if he throw the very same an hundred times, there is no body, who will not conclude, that this proceeds from some extraordinary Art.

S E C T. XII.

And by Miracles.

ANother most certain proof of *God's Providence*, may be taken from those *miracles* and *prophecies* which are recorded in Histories: Where though many fabulous things be related in that kind, yet those that are testified by sufficient Witnesses living in the time when they came to pass; such I mean as were defective neither in judgment nor in honesty, are not to be despised as altogether impossible. For in as much as *God* is both *omnipotent* and *omniscient*, what can hinder him from signifying what he knows, or what he pleaseth to do; and that even beyond the common course of nature, which being made and ordained by him, becomes subject unto him by the title of Creation? Now if any do object that such things might have been done by subordinate powers and *minds* inferiour to *God*; to them we answer, that so much may be granted indeed:

indeed : but yet this makes way, that the same may the more easily be credited of *God*; who is to be thought either to work by the mediation of those *Agents*, or else out of his wisdom to permit them when they bring to pass any such thing. For in well ordered Kingdoms there is nothing done against the Statutes and common Laws, but by the arbitrament or permission of the *Supreme Governours*.

S E C T. XIII.

Specially among the Jews whereunto credit may be given by reason of the long continuance of their Religion.

NOW that there have indeed been some *miracles* seen, though the credit of other Histories should be questionable; yet it is manifest enough in the *Jewish Religion* : which albeit, it hath long been destitute of all humane helps, yea, exposed to contempt and scorn; yet for all that, hath still continued almost in all the Climates and parts of the World even unto this day; whereas all other *Religions* (saving the Christian, which is the perfection, as it were, of the *Jewish*) have either vanished, as soon as the Imperial Power and Authority was withdrawn whereby they were supported, as all the *Paganish* : or else are still perpetually upheld by the same power and authority, as *Mahometanism*. Now if it be demanded why the Jewish Religion hath taken such deep root in the hearts of the *Hebrews*, as that it cannot

cannot thence be eradicated? no better reason can be given or conceived than this; namely, that those *Jews* that are now alive did from their Parents, as those Parents from their Progenitors, and so upward, until the times of *Moses* and *Joshua*, receive those Miracles mentioned in Scripture, *by certain and constant Tradition*, which miracles were done chiefly at the departing out of *Aegypt*, and in their journey through the Wilderness, and entrance into the Land of *Canaan*, whereof their Ancestors were then Eye-witnesses. Nor is it at all credible, that it could otherwise have come to pass, that a People who were sufficiently stiff-necked, and of a stubborn disposition, should take upon them a Law burdened with so many Rites; or that wise Men, out of the many marks of Religion, which humane reason could have invented, should chuse Circumcision; which could not be received without very great pain; nor retained without the derision of all strangers; and had nothing in it to recommend it, save only this, that God was its Author.

S E C T. XIV.

*Also by the truth and antiquity of Moses
his Story.*

BESIDES, *The writings of Moses*, wherein those miracles are recorded to posterity, do gain the greatest credit *thereunto*; not only because it was always a settled opinion, and constant report amongst the *Hebrews*, that this same *Moses*

was commended by the *Oracle of God* to be a Leader of the People ; but also because it is manifest enough, that he neither affected his own glory, nor desired their riches ; forasmuch as himself reveals his own faults and delinquencies, which he might have concealed ; and also he assigned the dignity of his Kingdom and Priesthood unto strangers, whence his own Posterity was brought to the common condition of *Levites*. By all which it appears, that he had no reason to forge untruths : Neither doth he use any dissembling or alluring language, such as commonly colours over a lye ; but he speaks after a plain, ingenuous manner, according to the quality of the thing he treats of.

Add hereunto the undoubted *Antiquity* of the Books of *Moses*, to which no other Writings are therein comparable : An argument whereof is, for that the *Grecians* (from whom all kinds of learning were derived to other Heathens) do confess they received their very Letters from others ; which Letters of theirs have no other order, or name, or ancient form, than that of the Syriack or Hebrew Tongue : As also for that the most ancient *Grecian Laws*, whence the *Romans* collected theirs, had their Original from the Laws of *Moses*.

SECT. XV.

And by the Testimony of many Gentiles.

Moreover, besides these, there are many testimonies of such as were Aliens from the *Jewish Religion*, which declare that the most ancient reports which passed for truth among all Nations, were agreeable to what *Moses* hath related in his Writings. Thus what things he related concerning the beginning of the World: The same are found also recorded in the most ancient Histories of the *Phœnicians*, which are collected by *Sancuniathon*, and translated by *Philo Biblius*; and partly also found amongst the *Indians* and *Egyptians*. Hence it is that in *Linus*, *Hesiod*, and many of the *Grecians*, mention is made of a *Chaos*, which some have intimated by the name of an Egg; also of the making of living Creatures, and last of all of Man according to a *Divine Image*; and of Man's dominion over other Creatures: All which may be read in sundry Authors, and at last in *Ovid*, who transcribed them out of the *Greek Writers*. That all things were made by the *Word of God*, was confessed even by *Epicharmus*, and the *Platonicks*; and before them, by a most ancient Writer (not of those Hymns, which now go under that name, but) of those Verses which Antiquity called *Orphean Verses*; not because they had *Orpheus* for their Author, but because they summarily comprised his Doctrine. *Empedocles* acknowledged that the Sun was not the *primitive light*, but a fit receptacle of light. *Aratus* and *Catullus* think that above the sphere

or orb of the Stars there is a Divine Habitation, wherein *Homer* imagined there was perpetual light.

That of all things, *God* was the most ancient, because not begotten; the World most beautiful, because the work of *G O D*: and that darkness was before the light, were all the doctrines of *Thales*, out of the ancient Learning: The last point whereof is found in *Orpheus* and *Hesiod*; whereupon the *Gentiles*, that are commonly superstitious in following old fashions and customs, do number their particular times by *nights*, not by days. It was the opinion of *Athenagoras*, that all things were ordered and disposed by the highest intelligence; of *Aratus*, that the Stars were made by *God*; and after the *Grecians*, of *Virgil*, that life was infused into things by the Spirit of *God*: and that Man was formed of *Clay*, is delivered by *Hesiod*, *Homer*, and *Callimachus*: Lastly, *Maximus Tyrius* affirms, that by the common consent of Nations, it is agreed, there is but one Supreme *God*, which is the cause of all things. And the memory of the finishing the Creation in seven days space, was preserved, not only among the *Greeks* and *Italians*, by the honour they gave to the *Seventh Day*, (as we learn out of *Josephus*, *Philo*, *Tibullus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Lucian*) but among the *Gauls* and *Indians*, who all distinguished their time, by Weeks, i. e. seven days; as we are taught by *Philostratus*, *Dion Cassius*, *Justin Martyr*; and the most ancient Names of the Days of the Week.

Moreover, the *Egyptians* taught, that Man, at the beginning, led his life in all simplicity, being naked in his body, and not ashamed: Whence came the Poets fiction of the golden age, which was

was famous even amongst the *Indians*, as *Strabo* relates. The History of *Adam* and *Eve*, the *Tree*, the *Serpent*, was extant, as *Maimonides* tells us, among the Idolatrous *Indians*, in his time : And that the same is found among the Pagans of *Pegu*, and the *Philippin* Islands, People of the same *India* ; the name of *Adam* also among the *Brachmans*, and the account of 6000 Years being passed since the World was made, among those of *Siam* ; we have Witnellses of our own age which assure us.

And that the lives of those who succeeded the first Men, were prolonged to near a Thousand Years, is reported by *Berosus* in his *Chaldaicks*, *Manethos* in his *Egypticks*, *Hieromus* in his *Phœnician* Records, *Hestians*, *Hecatæus*, *Hellanicus*, in the account they have left of the *Græcian* affairs ; and among the Poets, by *Hesiod*. Which is the less incredible, when we consider what is reported in the Histories of very many Nations, (particularly by *Pausanias* and *Philostratus* among the *Greeks*, and *Pliny* among the *Romans*) that the Bodies of Men were anciently far larger than they are now ; as was found upon the opening of some of their Sepulchres.

Catullus also, after very many *Greeks*, reports, that heavenly visions appeared unto Men before such time as they, by the multitude and heinousness of their crimes, did deprive themselves of that sacred acquaintance and familiarity with *God*, and his ministring Spirits. The wild life of the *Gyants* which *Moses* mentions, may be read almost every where in the *Greek*, and in some *Latin* Authors. 'Tis to be noted of *Noah's* Flood, that in its history the memory of almost all Nations ends ; even of such Nations as were un-

known till of late years: whereupon *Varro* called all the space before, the hid or unknown time. But those things we find wrapt up in the licentious Fables of the *Poets*, are truly, that is agreeable to *Moses*, delivered by most ancient Writers: Such are *Berosus* of the *Chaldees*, *Abydenus* of the *Assyrians*, who mentions the sending out of a Dove; as also *Plutarch* of the *Grecians*; and *Lucian*, who saith, that at *Hieropolis* in *Syria*, there is to be seen a most ancient History, both of *Noah's Ark*, and of those that were saved therein, both Men and Beasts. The same History was extant also in *Molo*, and in *Nicolaus Damascenus*; the latter of which had also the name of the Ark: Which is found likewise in *Deucalion's History* in *Apollodorus*. To which we may add, that in several parts of *America*, as in *Cuba*, *Mechoacana*, *Nicuraga*, there hath been preserved the memory of the Flood; of the Creatures saved from perishing in it; yea, of the Raven and the Dove; and the memory of the Flood it self, even in that part now called the *Golden Castle*, is witnessed by very many of the *Spanish Nation*.

In what part of the World Men lived before the Flood, that note in *Pliny*, of the building of *Joppe*, before the same Flood doth testifie. That the place whereon *Noah's Ark* rested after the Flood was in the *Gordien Mountains*, it is manifest by the constant remembrance thereof with the *Armenians*, from all Ages, until this time, *Japhet* the Father of the *Europeans*, whence came *Ion*, or, as anciently they pronounced the word, *Javon* of the *Grecians*, and *Hammo* of the *Africans*, and such like, are names which are found in *Moses* his writings; as there are also foot-steps

steps of the rest, in the names of Nations and Countries, observed by *Josephus* and others. And then the endeavour of climbing up to Heaven, which of the Poets doth not mention? The burning of *Sodom* is spoken of by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo*, *Tacitus*, *Pliny* and *Solinus*. The most ancient use of Circumcision hath been related by *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Strabo*, *Philo Biblius*; and now is retained by the Posterity of *Abraham*, to wit, not only the *Hebrews*, but also the *Idumeans*, *Ismaelites*, and others. A certain History of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob* and *Joseph*, agreeing with that of *Moses*, was anciently extant in *Philo Biblius*, out of *Sancuniath*; in *Berosus*, *Hecataeus*, *Damascenus*, *Attrapanus*, *Eupolemus*, *Demetrius*, and partly in that old Author of the aforesaid *Orphean Verses*; and now also there are some remainders thereof in *Iustin*, out of *Trogus Pompeius*: And almost in every one of these Authors aforesnamed, there is some mention made of *Moses* and his *Acts*; more particularly, how he was taken out of the Waters, and how the two *Tables* were given unto him of God, is plainly set down in those *Orphean Verses* aforesaid. Add unto these the testimony of *Polemon*; also what some of the *Egyptians* themselves have recorded, to wit, *Manethon*, *Lyfimachus*, and *Charimon*, concerning the departing out of *Egypt*.

Neither will it enter into the heart of any wise Man, to think that *Moses* (having so many Enemies, both of the *Egyptians*, and of other Nations, as the *Idumeans*, *Arabians* and *Phoenicians*) would dare to divulge ought concerning the beginning of the World, and other ancient things, which either could be confuted by other more ancient Writings, or were repugnant to the

common received opinion in those times : Neither, doubtless, would he publish any thing touching the affairs in that Age, which could be justly gainsayed or disproved by the testimonies of any then living. Of this *Moses* there is mention made by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo* and *Pliny*, by *Tacitus* also; and after all them, by *Dionysius Longinus*, in his Book concerning sublimity of Speech. Likewise *Jamnes* and *Mambres*, that resisted *Moses* in *Egypt*, are mentioned, not only by the Authors of the *Talmud*, but by *Pliny* and *Apuleius*. Amongst others, the *Pythagoreans* speak much of the Law it self which was given by *Moses*, and of the Legal Rites. Both *Strabo* and *Justin*, out of *Trogus*, give an excellent testimony of the ancient *Jewish Religion* and *Justice*; insomuch that here (methinks) 'tis needless to produce any further testimony of such things as are found, or have anciently been found, consenting with the Books of the *Hebrews*, touching *Joshua* and others; seeing that whosoever gives credit unto *Moses*, (which to do, no Man can, without great impudency, refuse) the same must needs confess, that there were, indeed, wonderful Miracles anciently wrought by God; which is the thing we here chiefly go about to declare.

As for the Miracles of After-Ages, suppose of *Elijah* and *Elisha*, and others, there is the less reason to think them counterfeit; because in those times *Judea* was both more known than formerly, and, upon the account of diversity of Religion, was extremely hated by their Neighbours; who might have very easily blasted the Fame of such Miracles, if they had been lyes, as soon as it began to be spread abroad. The History of *Jonah*, who lay three days in the Whale's Belly,

Belly, is to be read in *Lycophron*, and *Aeneas Hazous*; save only that, instead of *Jonah*, they have put the name of *Hercules*; whom they so much honoured, that to make him appear the more illustrious, they were wont (as *Tacitus* and *Servius*, and others, have noted) to report of him whatsoever magnificent things they heard of in any other places.

Certain it is, that *Julian*, who was an Enemy of the *Jews*, as much as of Christians, was forced, by the evidence of History, to confess; that such Men lived amongst the *Jews* as were inspired with the holy Spirit of *God*; and that Fire descended from Heaven, upon the Sacrifices of *Moses* and *Elias*. And verily, 'tis well worth our observation, that amongst the *Hebrews* there were not only grievous punishments appointed for such Men as did falsely assume to themselves the *Prophetical Function*, but also many Kings, and great Men, that might have by that means purchased authority to themselves; and likewise very many learned Men, as was *Esdra*s, and others, that never durst arrogate to themselves this dignity; nor any Man else, for divers Ages before the times of *Jesus*.

S E C T. XVI.

The same is proved by the Oracle and Predictions.

BUT more unlikely it is, that so many thousand People should be imposed upon, in the avouching of a perpetual and publick Prodigy,

(as we may call it) to wit, the *holy Oracle*, which after a resplendent manner, shined from the breast-plate of the *High-Priest*: The truth whereof was so strongly believed by all the *Jews* to have continued until the destruction of the first Temple, that out of all doubt, their Ancestors had certain knowledge concerning the same.

Like to this from *miracles*, there is another argument as forcible and effectual to prove *G O D's Providence*, taken from those *Predictions of future events*, which among the *Hebrews* were many, and manifest. Such was that Prophecy of his being made Childless, who should attempt to re-edifie *Jericho*: And that at the Overthrow of the Temple at *Bethel* by a King named *Josiah*, foretold above Three Hundred Years before the thing came to pass. So likewise the very name, and chief acts of *Cyrus*, foretold by *Isaiah*: The event of *Hierusalem's* siege by the *Chaldeans*, fore-shown by *Jeremiah*: So also *Daniel's Prediction* touching the translation of the Empire of the *Assyrians* unto the *Medes* and *Persians*; then from them unto *Alexander of Macedon*, whose Empire should afterward, in part, be divided among the Successors of *Ptolemy* and *Seleucus*. And what evils also the *Hebrew Nation* should suffer from all these, but especially from *Antiochus Epiphanes*; which were so clearly foretold, that *Porphyry*, who compared with these Predictions, such *Grecian Histories* as were extant in his time, could no otherwise tell how to shift them off, than by saying, that those things which were *saith'd* upon *Daniel*, were written after such time as they came to pass; which is all one, as if one should deny that that was written in the time of *Augustus*, which hath been published in *Vergil's* name,

name, and was always reputed for *Virgil's* work: For there was never any more scruple made of the former amongst the *Hebrews*, than of this latter amongst the *Romans*.

To these things we may add very many, and most famous Oracles among the People of *Mexico* and *Pern*; which foretold the coming of the *Spaniards* into those Countries, and the calamities which should thereupon follow. And hither also may be referred, not a few dreams, so exactly agreeing with the events, which both in themselves, and in their Causes, were wholly unknown to them that dreamed; that they cannot, without great immodesty, be referred to chance, or to natural causes: Of which kind *Tertullian*, in his Book *Of the Soul*, hath collected illustrious examples, out of the most approved Authors. Spectres also, or Apparitions, belong to this head; which have been not only seen, but heard to speak; as those Historians relate, who are the farthest from superstitious credulity; and is reported by Witnesses of our own Age, who have lived in *China*, and in *Mexico*, and other parts of *America*. Nor are publick trials of innocence, by touching of red-hot Plow-shares, to be despised; which the Histories of so many *German Nations*, and the Laws themselves have remembred.

S E C T. XVII.

The Objection is answered, why Miracles are not now to be seen.

Neither is there any reason to object against such Miracles, because there are not the like to be seen in these days, neither the like predictions heard of; for it is a sufficient proof of *Divine Providence*, that such things did come to pass at any time: Which being once granted, it will follow, that *God* may be believed with as much *providence* and *wisdom*, now to cause them to surcease, as anciently he used the same. Neither stands it with reason, that those *Laws*, which were given to the Universe, concerning the natural course of things, and uncertainty of future events, should be lightly or always transgressed: But only at such a time, when either there was a just cause; as, when the worship of the true *God* was almost banished out of the World, residing only in a little part thereof, to wit, in *Judea*, where it necessarily was to be (as it were) fortified with new aids, against the impieties wherewith it was compassed about; or when *Christian Religion* (whereof by and by we shall speak more particularly) was first, by *God's Decree*, to be published throughout the World.

S E C T. XVIII.

And that now there is such liberty in offending.

THere are those who are wont to doubt of the Divine Providence, because they see so much wickedness hath, like a Deluge, overspread the face of the whole Earth; which Divine Providence, they contend, if there were any, would have made its chiefest business to restrain and suppress. But this is easily answered, considering that when *God* had created Man with freedom to do good and evil, reserving absolute and immutable goodness to himself, it had not been reasonable to have put such a stop to evil actions, as should have been contrary to that liberty. Howbeit, to keep Men from sin, *God* useth every kind of means, which is not repugnant to the liberty aforesaid. Such is the ordaining and publishing of the *Law*, together with inward and outward admonitions, both by *threats*, and also *promises*. Nor doth he suffer the effects of wickedness to spread so far as they might have done: Whence it is, that all kind of government could never yet be subverted, nor the knowledge of *Divine Laws* utterly extinguished or abolished. Neither may *those delinquences* which are permitted to be done amongst Men, be thought altogether unprofitable; since that (as before we have touched) they may be used either for the punishment of other no less lewd transgressors; or for the chastisement of such as sometimes wander from the way of virtue; or lastly, to exact some worthy pattern of patience

patience and constancy from such as have made good proficiency in the School of *Piety* and *Virtue*. Lastly, even they whose wickedness seems to be winked at for a time, are wont to pay dearly for it at last; and to be reckoned withal the more severely, because they have been long forborn: Insomuch that it is plain, they suffer what God would, who have done what He would not.

SECT. XIX.

Insomuch that good Men are oppressed.

BUT, and if sometimes there seem to be no punishment at all inflicted upon profane Offenders, and even some *good Men* (which may occasion the weak to be offended) are sore oppressed by the insolencies of the wicked, who many times make them not only to lead a wearisome and miserable *life*, but also to undergo a disgraceful *death*; we are not presently to banish from humane affairs the Providence of God, which hath been proved, as we have now said, by strong reasons; but rather (as the wisest sort of Men have thought) we should conclude and argue thus.

S E C T. XX.

The same Argument is retorted to prove that the Soul survives the Body.

FOrasmuch as *God* hath an *Eye* unto all Men's actions, and in himself is *most just*, suffering such things to come to pass, as we see they do; therefore we must expect that there will be some future Judgment after this Life, to the end such *notorious transgressions* may not remain unpunished, nor *well-deserving vertue* be unrecompenced with due comfort and reward.

S E C T. XXI.

Which is proved by Tradition.

Further, to confirm this *truth*, it must necessarily be admitted, that the *Souls of Men* do survive their Bodies. Which most ancient *Tradition* was derived from our very first Parents, (for from whence else could it proceed?) unto almost all civilized People; as is plain by *Homer's Verses*; and by *Philosophers*, not only of the *Grecians*, but likewise the *Druides* in *France*, and *Brachmans* in *India*, and by those relations also which many *Writers* have published concerning the *Egyptians*, and *Thracians*, and *Germans*. In like manner, touching *God's judgment* to come after this life, many things we see were extant, as well among the *Grecians*, as also among the *Egyptians*.

Egyptians and Indians; as we learn out of *Strabo*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and *Plutarch*: Whereunto may be added that old *Tradition* of the *Consumption of the World by fire*, which was anciently found in *Hystaspis* and the *Sibyls*, and now also in *Ovid* and *Lucan*, and the *Indians* of *Siam*: Of which thing the *Astrologers* have noted this to be a sign, that the *Sun* draws nearer and nearer to the *Earth*. Yea, when the *Canaries*, *America*, and other foreign places were first discovered, this same opinion of the *Immortality of Men's Souls*, and the last *Judgment*, was found among the *Inhabitants* there.

SECT. XXII.

Against which no contrary Reason can be brought.

NEither can there any reason in nature be given, to disprove so ancient and common received *tradition*. For every thing that in this *World* comes to an end, perishes either through the *opposition* of some more forcible *contrary Agent*, as coldness in any subject, by reason of the more prevalent power and intention of heat; or through the subtraction of that *subject*, whereupon it depends; as the quantity of the glass, when the glass is broken; or through the defect and want of the *efficient cause*, as light by the *Sun-setting*. Now none of all these can be said to happen unto the *Soul of Man*: Not the *first*, because there is nothing that is *contrary to the Soul*; nay, it self is of such a peculiar nature, that

that it is apt to receive such things as are *contrary* between themselves, at the same time together, after its own, that is, after a *Spiritual and Intellectual* manner. Not the *second*, for there is not any *subject* whereon the nature of the *Soul* hath any dependance: if there were, in all probability it should be the *humane body*: but that this cannot be, it is manifest, because when the *powers* and *abilities* of the *Bodies* are tired in their operations; the mind alone doth not by motion contract any *weariness*. Likewise the powers of the *Body* are impaired and weakned by the redundancy or excess of the *object*, as the sense of seeing by the full splendor and bright face of the *Sun*: but the more excellent objects that the *Soul* is conversant about, as about *universals* and figures *abstracted* from sensible matter, it receives thereby the more *perfection*. Again, the *powers* that depend upon the *Body* are only busied about such things as are limited to particular *time* and *place*, according to the nature and property of the *Body* it self: but the *mind* hath a more noble *object*, and ascends to the contemplation of that which is *infinite* and *eternal*. Wherefore then seeing that the *Soul* depends not upon the *Body* in its *operation*, neither doth it in its *essence*: for we cannot discern the nature of invilible things otherwise than by their operations. Neither is the *third* way of corruption incident to the *Soul*, there being no *efficient cause* from which the *Soul* proceeds by a continual emanation. For we cannot say our Parents are such a cause; since, when they are dead, their Children are wont to live. But if we will needs make *some cause*, from which the *Soul* proceeds, then we can imagine no other, save the first and *universal cause* of all things,

D

which,

which, as in respect of its power, is never *deficient*; so in respect of its *will*, to be *defective*; that is, for the *Almighty to will* the extinction and destruction of the *Soul*, no Man can ever be able to prove.

S E C T. XXIII.

Many Reasons may be alledged for it.

NAY, there are many *strong Arguments* for the contrary; as, namely, the *dominion* given unto Man over his own actions; the *natural desire*, that is in him to be immortal; the force of conscience comforting the mind for well done actions, though very troublesome, and supporting it with a certain hope: And on the contrary, the *sting* of a gnawing conscience at the remembrance of the ungodly and wicked actions, especially when the hour of death approacheth, as if it had a sense of an *imminent judgment*. And this *gnawing worm* of conscience the most profane Wretches and wicked Tyrants have not been able oftentimes to extinguish in them, no not then when they most of all desired it; as divers Examples do testify.

S E C T. XXIV.

*Whence it follows, that the end of all shall be
Man's happiness after this life.*

Seeing then the *Soul* is of a nature that in it self hath no ground or cause of its own corruption; and seeing also that God hath given us many signs and tokens whereby we ought to understand, that it is *his will* the *Soul* should survive the *Body*; what more noble end can be propounded to *Man*, than the state of eternal happiness? Which, in effect, is the same that *Plato* and the *Pythagoreans* spake of; saying, that it were good for *Man* if he could become most like unto *God*.

S E C T. XXV.

*Which to obtain, Men must get the true
Religion.*

NOW what this happiness is, and how it is to be attained, Men may search by probable conjectures: But if any thing concerning this matter be revealed by *God*, that must be held for a most certain and undoubted truth: Which since *Christian Religion* pretends to bring unto us, above others, it shall be examined in the next Book, whether or no Men ought to give credit thereunto, and assuredly build their Faith thereon.

The SECOND Book
OF THE
T R U T H
OF
Christian Religion.

S E C T. I.

To prove the Truth of Christian Religion.

IT is not our purpose in this Second Book to handle all the Points of *Christianity*; but after our hearty Prayers made to *Chri^t* the King of Heaven, that he would grant us the assistance of his *holy Spirit*, whereby we may be enabled for such a *Work*, we shall only endeavour to make it appear that the *Christian Religion* it self is most *true* and certain. Which I thus begin.

S E C T. II.

Here is shewn that Jesus lived.

THAT there was such a Person as *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, who lived heretofore in *Judaea*, when *Tiberius* was Emperour of *Rome*, is not only most constantly professed by all Christians, who are scattered over the face of all the Earth: but acknowledged by all the *Jews*, who now are, or ever wrote since those times. Nay, the very *Pagan* Writers, that is, such as are neither of the *Jewish* nor *Christian Religion*, namely, *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, *Pliny* the Younger, and many more after them, do testify the same.

S E C T. III.

And was put to an ignominious Death.

THAT the same *Jesus* was nailed to a Cross by *Pontius Pilate*, Governour of *Judaea*, is confessed also by all Christians; though it might seem very disgraceful to them, to be the Worshippers of such a Lord. The *Jews* also do the like; though they are not ignorant that upon this account they are very odious to Christians, in whose Dominions they live: because their Ancestors were the Men, that moved *Pilate*, and perswaded him to pass the sentence of Death upon *Jesus*. The *Pagan* Writers also, now named, have delivered the same to Posterity. Yea, the Acts of *Pilate* were

were extant a long time after, from whence this might have been proved ; to which Christians never made their Appeal. For neither did *Julian* himself, nor any other adversaries of *Christianity* ever make doubt hereof : So that hence it appears, that there was never any more certain story than this ; which (we see) may be confirmed, not only by the testimonies of some few Men, but also by the approbation of several Nations otherwise disagreeing and jarring among themselves.

SECT. IV.

Tet afterward was worshipped by prudent and godly Men.

ALL which though it be most true, yet we see how that throughout the remotest parts of the World he is worshipped as *Lord* ; and that not in our days only, or those which are lately passed, but ever since the time that this was done ; to wit, ever since the Reign of *Nero* the Emperor, when many People that professed this worship of *Christ* and *Christian Religion*, were for that cause tortured and put to death, as *Tacitus* and others do witness.

SECT. V.

The Cause whereof was, for that in his life time there were Miracles done by him.

NOW among such as professed *Christianity*, there were always many Persons, who were both judicious, and not unlearned. Such as (to say nothing now of the Jews,) *Sergius*, Governour of *Cyprus*, *Dionysius Areopagita*, *Polycarpus*, *Justinus*, *Irenaeus*, *Athenagoras*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, with divers others; who almost all being brought up in other Religions, and having no hopes of any Wealth or Preferment by *Christianity*, yet became Worshipers of *this Man*, that died so ignominious a death, and exhibited due honour to him as *God*: of which no other reason can be given, but this alone; that they made diligent enquiry, as became prudent Men, in a matter of greatest moment: and found that what was bruited abroad concerning the Miracles wrought by *Christ*, was true; and relied upon firm Witnesses. As the curing, and that with his Word only, and before all the People, divers grievous and inveterate Diseases; the restoring of Sight to him that was born blind; the multiplying of a few Loaves more than once, for the feeding many Thousands, who could testify the truth of it; the recalling of the Dead to Life again; and many more of the like kind. The report of which things had then such a certain and undoubted original; that neither *Celsus*, nor *Julian*, when they wrote against Christians, durst deny there were

were some Prodigies done by *Christ*; and the *Hebrews* in the Talmudical Books do openly confess it.

SECT VI.

Which Miracles were not wrought either by the help of Nature, or Assistance of the Devil; but meerly by the Divine Power of GOD.

THAT these wondrous Works were not wrought by any Natural Power, it is manifest, by this very thing, that they are called *wonders* and *miracles*. Nor is it possible by the force of nature, that any grievous Diseases and Infirmities should be cured meerly by a Man's *Voice*, or by the *virtue* of a *Touch*, and that even upon a sudden. And if such Works could have any way been ascribed to a Natural efficacy, it would have been said before now, either by those that were professed Enemies of *Christ* while he lived upon Earth, or by those that have been Adversaries of his *Gospel* since his death.

By the like Argument we may prove, that they were not juggling delusions, because they were done openly in the sight of all the People: amongst whom divers of the Learned sort did malign and bear ill will unto *Christ*, not without envy observing all that he did. Add further, that the like Works were often iterated, and the effects thereof were not transitory, but permanent and durable. All which being duly pondered, it must needs follow (as the *Jews* have confessed)

feſſed) that theſe Works proceeded from a more than Natural or Humane Power, that is, from ſome Spirit either good or evil. That they proceeded not from any *evil Spirit*, may be proved becauſe that the Doctrin of *Chriſt*, (for the confirmation whereof theſe Works were wrought) was quite oppoſite and contrary to bad *Spirits*. For it prohibits the worſhipping of *evil Angels*, and diſſwades Men from all uncleannels of affections and manners, wherein ſuch *Spirits* are much delighted. And this is alſo plain, for that whereſoever the Doctrin of the Goſpel was received and eſtabliſhed, there followed the downfall of the worſhip of Dæmons, and of Magical Arts; and one God was worſhipped with a deteſtation of Dæmons; whoſe power and authority, *Porphyry* acknowledges, was broken by the coming of *Chriſt*.

Neither is it to be thought that any wicked *Spirit* is ſo ignorant and fooliſh, as to effect and often bring to paſs things that are cauſes of its own hurt and diſgrace, and no way conducing to its honour or benefit. Beſides, it ſtands no way with the wiſdom or goodneſs of *God* himſelf to believe that he would ſuffer ſo harmleſs and innocent Men, ſuch as feared him, to be deceived by the *deluſion* of *Devils*: and ſuch were the firſt followers of *Chriſt*, as is plain by their innocent life, and by the many calamities which they endured for conſcience ſake.

But on the other ſide, if thou affirmeſt that thoſe works of *Chriſt* proceeded from ſome *good Spirits* which are inferiour to *God*; in ſo ſaying thou doſt confeſs that the ſame works were well pleaſing unto *God*, and did tend to the honour of his name; foraſmuch as *good Spirits* do nothing but

but what is acceptable and glorious unto *God* : To say nothing now of some of *Christ's* works, which were so miraculous, that they seem to have *God* himself for the *author* of them, and could not have been done but by the immediate Finger of an *omnipotent power*, as specially, the restoring divers Persons from Death unto Life again.

Now *God* doth not produce any Miracle, nor suffer any such Wonders to be wrought without just cause : For it becomes not a wise Maker of Laws to forsake and depart from his own *Laws*, unless upon some good and weighty reason : Now no other cause of these things can be given than that which was alledged by *Christ* himself, namely, that hereby his doctrine might be verified and confirmed. And doubtless they that were Spectators of his Works, could conceive no other reason thereof : among which since there were (as was said) many godly Men, piously and devoutly affected, it is horrible impiety to imagine, that *God* did work these things only to delude and deceive them. And this was one cause why very many of the *Jews* who lived about the time of *Jesus*, even such as could not be perswaded to relinquish or omit one jot of *Moses* his Law, such as those who were called *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites*, did notwithstanding acknowledge that this *Jesus* was a *Doctor* or *Master* sent from Heaven.

S E C T. VII.

Christ's Resurrection proved by credible Reasons.

BESIDES the Miracles that *Christ* wrought to confirm his Doctrine; another like Argument may be taken from his wonderful *Resurrection* to Life again, after that He was Crucified Dead, and Buried.

For the *Christians* of all Ages and Countries alledge the same, not only for a truth, but also as the most strong ground and chiefest foundation of their *Faith*; which could not be, unless those that first taught *Christianity*, did perswade their Auditors that the thing was so for certain. And yet they could not induce any wise Man to the belief hereof, unless they could verily affirm that themselves were Eye-witnesses of this matter. For without such an ocular testimony, no Man in his wits would have given credit unto them; especially in such times, when to believe them was to expose themselves to the greatest mischiefs and dangers. But that this was their constant Assertion, both their own Books, and other Writings do testifie. For out of their Books it appears, that they appealed unto Five hundred Witnesses that had beheld *Jesus* after he was risen from the Dead. Now it is not the fashion of liars and dissemblers to appeal to so great a number of Witnesses. Neither could it possibly so fall out that so many Men should agree and conspire together to bear false witness. Or suppose there had been no other Witnesses, save those twelve known

known *Apostles*, the first publishers of *Christian doctrine*, yet this had been sufficient. No Man is wicked for nothing. And *honour* for their lying they could not expect, in regard that all kind of dignities and promotions were then in the hands of the *Pagans* or *Jews*, from whom they received nothing but reproach and ignominy. Neither could they hope for any *Wealth* and *Riches*, because this profession was oftentimes punished with the loss of goods and possessions: or if it was not; yet the *Gospel* could not be taught by them, unless they omitted or neglected all care about worldly goods. Neither could the hope of any other *worldly advantage* move them to utter untruths; seeing that the very preaching of the *Gospel* did expose them to labours, hunger, thirst, stripes and imprisonments.

To get *credit* and reputation only among their own Country-men was not so much worth, that they poor simple Men, whose life and doctrine was abhorrent from all pride, should therefore run upon so great inconveniences. Neither again could they have any hope their doctrine would make such progress, as to win them any fame; being opposed both by the nature of Man, which is intent to its own advantage, and by the authority of them, who then every where governed, unless they had been some way animated and encouraged by the *promise of God*.

To which we may add, that they had no reason to promise themselves, that this fame, such as it might prove, would be durable: since they expected (God on purpose concealing his counsel in this matter) the end of the whole World as nearly approaching; which both their own Writings, and the Writings of those Christians
that

that followed them, make most evident. It remains therefore that we say, if they did lye, it was for the defence of their Religion; which cannot with any reason be laid to their charge, if the thing be rightly considered. For either they did sincerely believe that this *Religion* which they professed was the *true Religion*, or else they were of a contrary mind. If they did not believe it to be *true*; nay if they thought not that it was absolutely the best, they would never have made choice hereof, and refused other *Religions* far more safe and commodious. Nay further, though they conceived it to be *true*, yet they would not have professed it, unless they had been fully persuaded, that the profession thereof was *necessary*; specially, for that they might have easily foreseen, and partly they could tell by experience what troops of Men would be exposed to death for this *profession*, which without just cause to occasion was no better than plain robbery or murder.

But if we say, they believed that this *Religion* was true, and the very best, and by all means to be professed, and that after the death of their *Lord and Master*: surely, that could no way be so, if their Master's promise concerning his Resurrection had deceived them, and not proved true. For that had been enough to make any Man in his wits disbelieve, even that which he had already entertained.

Moreover all Religions, and Christianity more than any other, forbids lying in bearing false witness, especially in divine things, wherefore they could not for the love of *Religion*, and that such a Religion, be induced to tell untruths. Besides, these Men were of an upright conversation; their life was spotless and unblameable even in the judgment

judgment of their adversaries ; who had nothing to object against them, save their simplicity, which of all other dispositions is the most unlikely to forge a lye. Nay, there were none among these Primitive *Christians* (whereof we speak) who did not suffer grievous torments for professing that *Jesus was risen* : and many of them were put unto most exquisite pains of death for bearing testimony of the same. Now granting it to be possible, that a Man in his wits may be content to endure such things, for some opinion which he hath conceived, and really believes in his mind ; yet that for a falshood, which he knows to be so, not only some one Man, but a great many Men, who are like to gain nothing at all by making that falshood to be believed, should consent to suffer such cruel torments, is a thing altogether incredible.

Now that these were not Mad-men, both their conversation and their writings do abundantly testifie. Likewise what is spoken of the first Apostles, may also be said of *Paul*, who openly taught that he saw *Christ* sitting in Heaven : who also was not inferiour to any in the *Jewish Religion* ; nor might he have wanted dignities and preferments, if he would have followed the foot-steps of his *Fathers*.

Whereas on the contrary, by taking upon him the profession of *Christianity*, he became liable to the hatred and malignity of his Kinsfolks, and ingaged himself to undertake difficult, dangerous, and laborious travels through the World ; and last of all to undergo a disgraceful death and torment.

SECT. VIII.

Answer to the Objection, That the Resurrection seems impossible.

SUCH and so great testimonies no Man can disprove or gainsay, unless some will reply, that the thing it self is impossible to be done: for so are those things which imply a contradiction, as they speak. Howbeit that cannot be affirmed of this matter. It might indeed, if one could say that one and the self-same Man lived and died at the self-same time: But that a Man may be restored from death to life, especially by the power and vertue of him who first gave life and being unto Man, I see no reason why it should be accounted for a thing *impossible*.

Neither hath it been thought *impossible* by wise Men; for *Plato* writes that this was done to *Eri* an *Armenian*. And the like is related of a certain Woman by *Heracides* a Philosopher of *Pontus*, of *Aristeus* by *Herodotus*; and of another by *Plutarch*: all which, (whether true or false) do shew that in the opinion of learned and wise Men the thing was conceived to be possible.

SECT.

S E C T. IX.

The Resurrection of Jesus being granted, the Truth of his Doctrine is confirmed.

NOW if it be neither impossible that *Christ* should return to Life again; and it doth sufficiently appear by great Testimonies (where-with *Rabbi Bechai*, a Master of the *Jews*, was so convinced, that he acknowledged the truth of this thing) and this *Christ* himself also, as both his Disciples and others confess, did publish a new Doctrine, as by a Divine Commandment: truly it necessarily follows, that that Doctrine is true. For it doth not consist with the Divine Justice and Wisdom to honour Him after so excellent a manner; who had committed the crime of falsifying in so weighty a matter. Especially considering that before his Death he had foretold to his Disciples, both his Death, and the kind of it, and his Resurrection to Life again: adding this withal, that these things should therefore come to pass, that they might testify and confirm the truth of his Doctrine.

And thus much for the Arguments which arise from the facts themselves which were done: Let us proceed to those which arise from the nature and quality of his Doctrine.

S E C T. X.

Christian Religion preferred before all others.

AND here truly we must say, that either all kind of *divine Worship* whatsoever must be rejected, and utterly banished from among Men, (which impiety will never enter into the heart of any one that can believe *there is a God* who takes care of all things; and withal considers how Man is endued with excellency of understanding, and liberty to chuse what is morally good or evil; and upon that account is capable as of reward so of Punishment;) or else this *Religion* is to be admitted and approved of for the *very best*: not only in regard of the outward Testimonies of *works* and *miracles* aforesaid; but also in consideration of such *inward* and *essential properties*, as are agreeing thereunto: namely, because there is not, neither ever was there any other *Religion* in the whole World, that can be produced either more *honourab'e* for excellency of reward, or more absolute and *perfect* for Precepts, or more *admirable* for the manner according to which it was commanded to be propagated and divulged.

S E C T. XI.

For excellency of Reward.

FOR to begin with the reward that is at the end propounded to Man, which though it be the last in fruition and execution, yet is it the first in his intention: If we consider the institution

tion of the *Jewish Religion* by the hand of *Moses*, and the plain or exprefs covenant of the *Law*, we shall find nothing there promised save the welfare and *happinefs of this life* : as namely, a fruitful Land, abundance of Corn and Victual, victory over their Enemies, soundnefs of Body, length of Days, the comfortable Blessing of a hopeful Issue, and surviving Posterity, and the like. For if there be any thing beyond, it is involved in dark shadows, or must be collected by wise and difficult reasoning : Which indeed was the Cause why many (in particular the *Sadduces*, who professed themselves to be followers and observers of *Moses* his *Law*,) had no hope of enjoying any happinefs after this life.

As for the *Grecians*, who received their Learning from the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians*, and had some hope in another World, after this life was ended ; they spake thereof after a very doubtful manner ; as appears by the disputations of *Socrates*, by the Writings of *Tully*, *Seneca*, and others. And the Arguments they produce for it are grounded upon Uncertainties ; proving no more the happinefs of a *Man*, than of a *Beast* : Which while some of them observed, it was no wonder if they imagined that *Souls* were translated and conveyed from Men to Beasts, and again from Beasts into Men.

But because this Opinion was not confirmed by any testimonies, or grounded upon certain reason, (and yet it was undeniable that there is some end proposed to Man's actions,) therefore others were induced to think, that *virtue* was the end or reward of Mens endeavours ; and that a *wise Man* was happy enough, even though he were put into that tormenting brazen *Bull* made

by *Phalaris*. Howbeit this fancy was justly distastful and improbable to another sort, who saw well enough that Man's *happiness*, especially the highest, could not consist in any thing that was accompanied with perils, troubles, torment and death (unless we have a mind to follow the sound of words without the sense of things: Wherefore they placed Man's *chiefest happiness* and end in such things as were delightful and pleasing to *sense*. But yet this opinion also was disproved and sufficiently confuted by many, as being prejudicial to all *honesty*, the seeds whereof are rooted in our hearts by *nature*: as also because it debases Man, who is advanced to a higher pitch, and throws him down into the rank of Beasts; which stoop down, and pore upon nothing but what is on the Earth.

With these and such like Uncertainties and doubtings was *Mankind* distracted, at that time when *Christ* brought in the true knowledge of the *right end*: who promised unto his followers after their departure hence, a life, not only without death, without sorrow and trouble, but attended with the highest joy and *happiness*: and that not of one part of Man alone, to wit, of his *Soul*, (the felicity whereof after this life, partly by probable conjecture, and partly from tradition, was hoped for before) but also of his *Body* and *Soul* together. And this most justly; that the Body, which for the Divine Law, must often suffer grievances, torments and death, may not be without a recompence of *reward*. Now the reward and promised joys are not vile and base, as good chear and dainty fare, wherewith the more carnal sort of *Jews* feed their hopes; or the embraces of beautiful Women, which the

Turks

Turks expect to enjoy after death: for both these *sensualities* are proper to this frail life, at the best *being* but helps or remedies of mortality, the former of them conducing to the preservation of every particular Man or Beast: and the latter for the continuation of the same creatures by *succession* in their kind. But by the happiness aforesaid our *Bodies* shall be indued with constant vigour, agility, strength, and more than a star-like beauty. In the *Soul* there shall be an understanding without error, even of *God* himself and his Divine Providence, or whatsoever is now hid from us. And a *will* freed from all turbulency of passions, busied chiefly about the sight, the admiring and praising of the *Almighty*. In a word, all things much greater and better, than can be conceived by comparison with the best and greatest things in this World.

S E C T. XII.

Answer to an Objection, That Bodies once Dead cannot be revived again.

BESIDES the doubt but lately answered, there is another *difficulty* objected against this *Doctrine* of the *Resurrection*: namely, how can it be possible for *humane Bodies* once dissolved into dust and corruption ever to be united and set together again? But this relies upon no reason. For since it is agreed among most Philosophers, that howsoever things be changed, there remains still the same matter, capable of divers Species or Forms; who dare say, that either God doth not know in what places, though never so distant,

distant, the parts of that matter are, which belong to a humane Body; or, that He wants Power to reduce them and set them together again; and do that in his Universe, which we see Chymists do in their Fornaces, and Vessels, gather together and unite things of the same nature, though scattered and dispersed? And that a thing also may return to the form of its original, though the species be never so much altered, we see an example in the nature of things; as in the Seeds of Plants and living Creatures.

Neither is that knot impossible to be unloosed which is tyed by many; concerning those humane bodies which pass into the nourishment of wild Beasts or Cattle; who, being fed with them, become again the food of Man. For we must know, that the greatest *portion* of such things as we eat is not converted into integral parts of our bodies; but either turned into excrements, or humors of the body, as *Phlegm* and *Choler*; yea, much of that which becomes our nourishment is wasted away, either by diseases, or by inward natural heat, or by the Air about us. All which being so; he that so carefully regards all kinds of brute Beasts, that none of them perish, the same *God* with a more special *providence* can also provide for humane bodies, that so much of them as becomes the food of other Men, shall no more be converted into the *substance* of those that eat them, than are *poisons* or *physical potions*; and the rather, because it is in a manner naturally apparent, that humane Flesh was not intended for Man's food. Or suppose it were not so, but something which hath made an accession to the latter body must be taken from it again; this will not make it not to be the same body;
for

for even in this life there happen greater changes of particles than this comes to. Yea, we see, that a Butterfly is in a Worm; and the substance of Herbs or Wine in some very small things; from whence they may be restored to their former just magnitude. Surely, since both these and many other things may without any inconvenience be supposed, there is no reason that the restitution of a body dissolved should be reckoned among impossible things: which learned Men, *Zoroaster* among the *Chaldeans*, almost all the *Stoicks*, and *Theopompus* among the *Peripateticks*, believed not only might, but should be.

S E C T. XIII.

The excellency of holy Precepts given for the worship of God.

THE second thing wherein *Christian Religion* excells all others that are, or ever were, or can be imagined, is the great holiness of *Laws and Precepts*; both in those things that appertain to the Worship of God, and in those that concern other matters.

The holy Offices of the *Pagans* throughout almost the whole World, (as *Porphyry* shews at large, and the Navigations of our times have discovered) were full of cruelty; For it was the usage, in a manner every where to appease the Gods, even with the sacrifice of Humane Blood. Which custom neither the *Greek Learning*, nor the *Roman Laws* took away; as appears by what we read concerning the Victims made to *Bacchus Omestes* among the *Greeks*; and of a *Greek Man*

and Woman, and a Man and Woman of *Gaul*, which were sacrificed to *Jupiter Latiaris* at *Rome*: Those most holy Mysteries also, whether of *Ceres*, or of *Liber Pater*, were as full as ever they could hold of filthiness and obscenity; as appeared when the secrets of this Religion were once laid open, and began to be divulged: of which *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and others, have given us a large account. Those *Festival* days also which were consecrated to the honour of the *Gods*, were celebrated with such spectacles, that grave *Cato* was ashamed to be present at them. But in the *Jewish Religion* there was nothing unseemly, nothing dishonest or unlawful. Howbeit lest the People that were prone to *Idolatry*, should decline or fall back from the *true Religion*, it was loaded or burdened with many *precepts* concerning such things as in themselves were neither good nor evil; such were the *sacrificing* of Beasts, the *Circumcision*, an exact *rest* from labour upon the *Sabbath*, and the prohibition of eating sundry kind of *meats*; some of which customs the *Turks* have borrowed from them, adding further a prohibition for drinking *Wine*.

But the *Christian Religion* teacheth, that as *God* is a most *pure Spirit*; So is he to be worshipped with *pureness* of mind and *Spirit*, together with such works as in their own nature without a *precept* are most laudable and honest. Thus the professors thereof are not to circumcise the flesh, but their carnal *lusts* and *desires*; not to keep Holy-day by a rest from all kind of work whatsoever, but only from that which is unlawful. Nor are we to offer unto *God* the blood and fat of Beasts; but if need be, even our own blood for the testimony of the *truth*. And what bounty or liberality

rality soever we bestow upon poor and necessitous *persons*, to look upon it as given to *God* himself. We need not now abstain from any kind of meat or drink, but may and ought to use them both with moderation, so that our health be not thereby impaired; sometimes notwithstanding subduing our Bodies to our minds by *fasting*, that they thereby may be the better fitted and prepared for more chearful *devotion*. But the chief point of this Religion, it is every where apparent, lies in a pious confidence: by which being composed to a faithful obedience, we rely wholly upon God, and stedfastly believe the performance of his promises. Whence there arises a good Hope, and a true Love both of God and our Neighbours: which makes us obey his Precepts, not in a base servile manner, for fear of punishment; but that we may please him, and have him, out of his great goodness, our Father and Rewarder.

Moreover we are taught to *pray*, not for riches or honours, or such things as many times do hurt to those that wish much for them: but first and chiefly that which tends to *God's glory*; then for our selves, so much of these perishing things as nature desires; leaving the rest to Divine Providence: and satisfying our selves that all shall be well, which way soever things go. But for eternal things, it teaches us to pray with the most earnest desire, *viz.* for pardon of our sins past, and the assistance of his Spirit in time to come; whereby being strengthened against all terrors and allurements, we may constantly persist in a pious course of life.

This is the true *Worship of God in Christian Religion*, than which nothing can be invented more worthy of Almighty God.

SECT.

SECT. XIV.

Concerning the Offices of Humanity which we owe unto our Neighbour.

LIKE to these are the duties we owe unto our Neighbour. As for *Mahumet's Religion* being hatcht in Wars, it breaths nothing but Wars, and is propagated by Wars, and Hostility. Thus the Laws and Statutes of the *Lacedaemonians*, which among the *Greeks* were most applauded, even by the Oracle of *Apollo*, (*Aristotle* notes, and blames them for it) were wholly directed to warlike force. And yet the same *Aristotle* maintains War against *Barbarians* to be natural: when, on the contrary, 'tis certain that Men were by nature made to friendship and society. For what is more unjust and unequal, than for single Murders to be punisht; but to vaunt and triumph in the slaughter of whole Nations, as in a glorious exploit? And yet, that so much celebrated *Roman* Common-wealth, how did it come by such a Name, but by Wars? which oft times were manifestly unjust, as they themselves confess those were, against *Sardinia* and *Cyprus*. And truly generally, as the best Historians have committed to memory, most Nations thought Robberies and Plunders, without the bounds of their own Country, to be no disgrace at all to them. The exacting of revenge, *Aristotle* and *Cicero* make a piece of vertue: To behold Sword-players cut and slash each other, was one of the publick recreations of the *Pagans*; And nothing more ordinary than to expose their Children.

Among

Among the *Hebrews* indeed there was a better Law, and more holy Discipline : but yet to a People of an impotent Anger some things were connived at, and some things indulged. As a violent seizure upon the *seven Nations*, who had deserved it: with which not contented, they prosecuted all that differ'd from them with a cruel hatred; the signs and marks of which yet remain, in the prayers which they conceive against us Christians. But to prosecute him that hurt them, by rendring like for like; and to kill, by their own private hands, him that had slain any of their Kindred, was permitted by the Law it self. Whereas the Law of Christ forbids us to revenge any injury that is done us, either in words or deeds; lest that wickedness which we condemn in others, we should again allow by its imitation. It would have us do good to all, to the good indeed chiefly, but to the wicked also; after the Example of God, who bestows the benefit of the Sun, the Stars, the Rain, the Winds and Showers, in common upon all Men whatsoever.

S E C T. XV.

Of the Conjunction of Man and Woman.

THE Conjunction of Man and Woman, whereby Mankind is Propagated, is a thing most worthy of the care of Laws. Which part of them it is no wonder the *Pagans* neglected, when they told such lewd stories of the Whoredoms and Adulteries of the Gods which they worshipped. Nay the filthy and abominable use which one Man made of another, was defended by the example

example of their Gods. Into whose number, upon that account, *Ganymedes* was anciently put, and afterwards *Antinous*. Which flagitious wickedness is now most frequent among the *Mahometans*, and is thought lawful by the *Chineses*, and other Nations. Yea, the Philosophers of *Greece* seem to have made it their business, to find out an honest Name, for that most filthy thing.

Among which *Greek* Philosophers the most excellent commending community of Women; what did they do else but turn a whole City into one common Brothel-house? A most unworthy thing: for since there is among some mute Animals a certain conjugal League or Covenant, how much more equal is it, that so holy a Creature as Man should not be born of uncertain seed; with the extinction of all those mutual affections which are naturally between Parents and their Children.

The *Hebrew* Law indeed forbad all filthiness; but both allowed one Man to have more Wives; and gave the Husband also a right for any cause, to put away his Wife. Which the *Mahometans* at this day use; and the *Greeks* and *Latins* anciently with such licence, that the *Lacedamonians* and *Cato*, even lent their Wives to other Men, to use for a time.

But the most perfect Law of *Christ* penetrates to the very roots of Vices: and holds him who only attempts upon the chastity of any Woman, or looks lasciviously upon her, to be guilty before G O D, the Judge and Searcher of the Hearts, of that crime, which, though not acted, yet was desired. And since all true friendship is perpetual and insoluble, He would deservedly have that to be such, which with the society of minds, contains

tains also a conjunction of Bodies. Which, without all doubt, is most profitable also for the right education of those Children, that are the fruit of that Conjunction. Among the *Pagans*, some few Nations were content with one Wife; as the *Germans* and the *Romans*. Which the Christians now follow; that the mind of the Wife being intirely given to the Husband, may be compensated with an equal retribution: and the government of the Family may the better proceed under the direction of one Ruler: and divers Mothers may not bring in discord among Children.

S E C T. XVI.*Touching the use of Temporal Goods.*

AND now to come to the use of those things, which are vulgarly called *Goods*; we find that Thefts were permitted by some *Paganish* Nations, as the *Aegyptians* and *Lacedaemonians*: and they that did not allow this to private Men, did publickly little else, as the *Romans*: Who must have returned to their Huts and Cottages, the *Roman* Orator said, if they should have been bound to restore to every body his own.

The *Hebrews* indeed had no such custom, yet their *Law*, that it might sute it self in some measure, to the humor of that People, permitted them to take usury of Strangers; amongst other things promising the reward of riches to them that observed the *Law*.

But the *Law* of *Christianity* forbids not only all kind of *injustice* towards all sort of Men, but also prohibits us to take any carking and excessive

live *care* for these transitory things, because our mind is not able diligently and duly to attend unto two several matters; either of which are enough to take up the whole Man, and oftentimes draw us into contrary thoughts and counsels. Besides, the excessive *care* both for getting and keeping riches is accompanied with a kind of bondage and anxiety, which spoils that very pleasure which is expected from riches. Whereas those things that nature is content withal, are both few and easily acquired, without much labour or charge: yet if *God* bestow any *overplus* upon us, so that we have somewhat to spare, we are not commanded to cast the same into the *Sea*, as some *Philosophers* unadvisedly have done; neither must we keep it unprofitably, or lavish it out wastfully; but rather therewith we ought to supply the wants and exigencies of other Men, either by giving, or by lending to *them* that would borrow: as becomes those that look upon themselves not as *Lords* and *Masters* of the things they enjoy, but as *Stewards* and *Dispensers* under *God Almighty*, the *Father* and *Master* of all: knowing also that a benefit well bestowed is a treasure full of good hope; which neither the wickedness of *Thieves*, nor the variety of *Casualties* can in the least diminish.

A rare example of which true and unfeigned *liberality* we find in the primitive *Christians*, who sent relief as far as from *Macedonia* and *Achaia* to the poor that lived in *Palestine*; as if the whole World had been but one Family. And here in the Law of *Christ* this caution is added, that the hope of being paid again, or getting credit by it, do not deflowr our bounty; whose beauty and grace is quite lost with *God*, if it have respect

spect to any thing but him. And that no Man may pretend, for a cloak of his covetousness, that he fears he may have need of all that he hath, when he grows old, or falls into any calamity; the Law promises a special care of such Men as observe these Precepts. And to work a greater confidence in them, puts them in mind of the conspicuous providence of God in feeding the wild Beasts and Cattle, and in adorning the Herbs and Flowers; and represents withal what an unworthy thing it would be, if we should not believe so good and so powerful a God: but deal with Him, as if he were a bad Creditor, whom we will not trust any further, than while we have a Pawn or pledge in our hands for our security.

S E C T. XVII.

Of Swearing.

THERE are other *Laws* that forbid *Perjury*, but this Law of *Christ* will have us to refrain also from all kind of *Swearing*, unless we be lawfully call'd thereunto upon necessity. Nay enjoins such faithfulness and sincerity in all our words, that there may be no need to exact an Oath of us.

S E C T. XVIII.

Of other Matters.

MOREOVER there can nothing be found commendable and praise-worthy, either in the *Philosophical* writings of the *Grecians*, or in the sayings

sayings of the *Hebrews*, and other Nations, which is not contained in the *Precepts of Christianity*, and that also established by Divine authority: as namely, concerning modesty, temperance, goodness, decent behaviour, prudence, the office of Magistrates and Subjects, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, Man and Wife between themselves; and chiefly the eschewing those *vices* which among many of the *Grecians* and *Romans* went under the name and colour of *honesty*; such were the *desires* of honours and glory. And to be short, admirable is the *substantial brevity* of these *precepts*, comprehended in these few words, that we ought to *love* God above all things, and our *Neighbours* as our selves; that is, we must do as we would be done unto.

SECT. XIX.

Answer to an Objection touching the Controversies abounding among Christians.

BUT here peradventure some will object against this, which we speak concerning the *excellency of Christianity*, and tell us of the great diversity of opinions amongst *Christians*, whereupon there have sprung so many *sects* and *factions* as do now abound in the *Church*.

For answer whereunto, we may observe that the like *diversity* of opinions happens almost in all kind of *Arts* and *Sciences*, to wit, partly through the weakness of humane apprehension, and partly because Man's judgment is hindred and intangled by his affections. Howbeit this variety of opinions is contained within certain bounds

bounds and limits : for there are some *common principles* agreed upon by all, and whereupon they ground their doubts. Thus in *Mathematicks* 'tis questioned *whether a circle may be made quadrangular* : but not whether after the taking away of equal parts from equal, the residue will not remain equal. The same may be seen in *natural Philosophy*, also in the *Art of Physick*, and in other Disciplines. In like manner the *difference* of opinions that is amongst *Christians* doth not hinder the common consent and agreement in those *fundamental principles*, for which chiefly we have commended *Christian Religion* ; the certainty whereof appears in this, namely, that those which out of mutual and deadly hatred sought all the occasion and matter of contention they could, durst not for all that proceed so far, as to deny that these *Precepts* were commanded by *Christ* : no not even those that refuse to frame their lives and actions according to that rule.

But if there be any Man that will contradict these Principles, he is to be accounted like to those *Philosophers* that denied the *Snow to be white* : For as these are confuted by sense, so are those convinced by the unanimous consent of all *Christian Nations*, and of the Books which were written by the first Christians, and by those next to the first, and by the Doctors which followed afterward ; even those that witnessed their *faith* in *Christ* by their death. For in the opinion of any indifferent *Judge*, that must needs be reputed the *true doctrine* of *Christ*, which so many have successively acknowledged and professed ; like as we are perswaded that was the doctrine of *Socrates*, which we read in *Plato* and *Xenophon* ; as also that of *Zeno* the Philosopher, which we find held by the *Stoicks*.

S E C T. XX.

The excellency of Christian Religion is further proved from the dignity of the Author.

THE third thing wherein we said *Christian Religion* excelled all others that are, or can be devised, was the *manner* whereby it was delivered and divulged. Where first we shall speak of the *Author*.

They that were authors of the wisdom among the *Grecians*, confessed that they could not affirm almost any thing for certain in their *doctrine*, because (quoth they) *truth lies hid in a deep Pit*; and our minds are no less *dazled* in the contemplation of divine things, than the eyes of an Owl in beholding the bright shining of the *Sun*: Besides, there was none among them but was notoriously guilty of *some vice* or other. For some were flatterers of *Princes*, others addicted to the impure love of Boys or Harlots; others gloried in a Dog-like impudence. And that they all envied one another, their scolding about words or matters of no moment is a great argument; as this is of their coldness in the worship of God, that even they who believed one God, set him aside, and not only worshipped others, but such as they knew were no *Gods*; making that only the *rule* of their *Religion*, which was commonly received and practised in publick. Touching the *reward* of *godliness* they determined nothing for certain, as appears by the last (farewel) disputation of *Socrates* at his death.

Mahomet, the Author of a Religion that is spread very far, his own Followers do not deny, to have been a Man that abandoned himself to lust, throughout his whole life : But gave no assurance at all, by which Men may be satisfied, that there shall indeed be such a reward as he promised ; consisting in banqueting and in venery ; since they do not so much as pretend that his Body was raised to life again, but it lies buried at *Medina* to this day.

And as for *Moses* the Founder of the *Hebrew* Law, though he was an excellent Person, yet he cannot be freed from all blame : since he could scarcely be persuaded with much reluctance to undertake the Embassy, which God charged him withal to the King of *Egypt* : and expressed also some distrust of *God's* promise for bringing water out of the Rock, as the *Hebrews* themselves confess. And he did scarce partake of any one of those promises which by the Law he made unto the People, but was perplex'd with continual mutinies and seditions in the Wilderness ; neither was he permitted to enter into that blessed and pleasant Land, so much desired.

But *Christ* is described by his Disciples, as a Person without all sin ; nor did others ever produce any testimony to prove that He was guilty of the least : but whatsoever He prescribed to others, He performed Himself. For there was nothing that God gave Him in charge, which he did not faithfully perform ; being most simple and void of guile in his whole life ; most patient of injuries, nay, of cruel torments, as He shewed in suffering even the punishment of the Cross ; most loving and kind to all Men, even to his Enemies ; yea, those Enemies who put Him to death :

on whom he had such compassion that he beseeched God to forgive them.

As for the *reward* which he promised unto his Disciples, it is both said, and proved by undoubted arguments, that he himself is made partaker thereof after a most eminent and excellent manner. For after *he* was *risen* from the dead, there were many that beheld, and heard, and handled, and felt *Him*: He also ascended up into *Heaven* in the sight of his *Twelve Disciples*; where He obtained the highest *power*, as was evident in that according to his *promise* made at his departure, he endued them that were his *Followers* with ability to speak those Languages which they had never learnt, and with other wonder-working Powers; which will not let us doubt, either of his faithfulness, or of his Power to bestow upon us the reward which he hath promised. And thus we have shewn how that this *Religion* is more excellent than others, in regard that *Christ* the Author of it hath *himself* performed what he commanded; as also in his *own person* obtained, and already enjoyeth the *happiness* that he promised.

S E C T. XXI.

*Also from the wonderful spreading of
this Religion.*

LET us in the next place descend to the *effects* of this *doctrine* brought by him to the World: which, if they be well weighed, will appear to be such, that if God have any care of humane affairs,

affairs, this doctrine cannot but be believed to be Divine. It was very agreeable to Divine Providence, to make that which was best, to be of the greatest and largest extent. Now such was the success of the Christian Religion; which, we see published and taught through all *Europe*, not excepting the most Northern Provinces: and no less through all *Asia*, even the Islands of it in the Sea: through *Egypt* also and *Aethiopia*, and some other parts of *Africa*: And lastly, through *America*. Nor is this only done now, but was so anciently, as is witnessed by the *Histories* of all times, by the Books of *Christians*, the acts of *Synods*, and by that old Tradition at this day preserved among the *Barbarians* concerning the Travels and Miracles of *Thomas*, *Andrew*, and other *Apostles*. *Clemens*, *Tertullian*, and some *Ancients* besides, have noted how far the name of *Christ* was known amongst the *Britains*, *Germans*, and other most remote Nations in their times. And certainly there is no other *Religion* comparable hereunto for ample and large extent. *Paganism* indeed is one name, but cannot be said to be one *Religion*; since that it was neither agreed upon by the *Professors* thereof what one thing they should worship; but some adored the *Stars*, others the *Elements*, and a third sort revered their *Cattel*, others such things as have no *subsistence*: Nor was this Worship performed by virtue of the same Law, nor from any common Master.

The *Jews* indeed are dispersed and scattered up and down, yet remain one people. Howbeit their *Religion* had never any notable growth or increase after *Christ's* Ascension: and their *Law* was not so much made known by them, as by *Christians*.

Then for *Mahumetanism*, it is possessed of Land enough, but 'tis not alone: for *Christian Religion* is also professed in the same Countries; where, in some places there are greater numbers of Christians than of *Turks*: who, on the contrary, are not to be found at all, in most parts where Christianity is planted.

SECT. XXII.

Considering the meekness and simplicity of them that first taught this Religion.

IT follows that we consider by what means this *Christian Religion* had its augmentation and increase, that *therein* it may be comparable, and preferred before others. We see it commonly true of most Men, that they will easily follow the *examples* of Kings and Potentates what way soever they go; specially if *Law* and Penalties compell them to it. Hereby were the *Religions* of the *Pagans*, and of *Mahomet* propagated. But *they* that first taught the *Christian Religion* not only wanted all civil power and authority, but were of *mean* condition, no better than poor Fishermen, Weavers, and the like. Yet by such Mens pains and industry, *that doctrine*, within the space of Thirty Years, or thereabouts, was published not only throughout all the parts of the *Roman Empire*, but also among the *Parthians* and remote *Indians*.

Nor was it thus only in the beginning; but for almost *three* whole Ages together, this Religion was so promoted by the endeavours of private

vate Men; without any threatnings; without any Worldly thing to invite Men to it: yea, against the will and the most violent opposition of those who then had the Imperial Power; that before *Constantine* professed Christianity, this was become, very near, the greatest part of the *Roman World*.

Amongst the *Grecians* that taught Morality, divers there were that commended themselves also very much by their skill in other Arts. As the *Platonists* were famous for the study of *Geometry*, the *Peripateticks* for the History of *Plants* and living Creatures, the *Stoicks* for *Logical* subtilty, the *Pythagoreans* for knowledge of numbers and harmony: many also were admirable for eloquence, as *Xenophon*, *Plato*, and *Theophrastus*. But the first *Doctors* and Teachers of *Christianity* were endued with no such art, but used the plainest language, without inticing words; only after a bare manner or naked form of speech pronouncing their precepts, promises, and threatnings. Which having no efficacy in themselves proportionable to such a progress as Christianity made, we must needs confess, it was either attended by Miracles, or by *God's* secret power assisting the business, or both together.

S E C T. XXIII.

What great impediments there were that might terrifie Men from the embracing or the professing hereof.

Hereunto may be added another thing considerable, namely, that they who received Christianity from those Teachers, had not their minds void of a certain form and rule of Religion; and so were not by that means ductile and easie to be drawn, as they were who first received the *Paganish* worship and *Mahomet's* Law: much less was their minds prepared for it, by some antecedent institution; as the *Hebrews* by Circumcision, and the knowledge of one God, were made fit to accept the Law of *Moses*: But quite contrary, were filled with Opinions and Customs, which are a kind of another nature, repugnant to those new Institutions; being educated, *viz.* and confirmed by the authority of Laws and of their Parents, in the *Paganish* Religion, or the *Jewish* Rites.

Besides this, there was another *impediment*, to wit, the most grievous evils, which they who undertook Christianity, must expect to suffer, or had reason to fear, upon that account. For seeing that humane nature abhors such evils, it must needs follow, that the *causes* of those evils cannot be admitted of without much difficulty. A long time were the *Christians* deprived of all honours and dignities; and likewise much afflicted with divers penalties, with confiscation of goods and banishments: which notwithstanding were

were all but *flea-bitings*, for they were condemned to dig in the Mines; and to suffer torments, than which more cruel could not be devised.

And such multitudes of them were put to death, that there never was a greater number of Men at one time swept away, and devoured, either by *famine*, or *pestilence*, or *war*, as the *writers* of those times do testifie. Their manner and kind of death also was not *ordinary*, but some were buried alive; others crucified; others endured punishments of the like kind, which cannot be read or thought of without the greatest horror: and yet this savage cruelty, which continued without much intermission (and that not every where) till almost the time of *Constantine*, in the *Roman World*, and in other places endured longer; was so far from diminishing the number of Christians; that, quite contrary, their Blood might be called the Seed of the Church: there sprang up still so many, in the room of those that were cut off.

Now let us herein also compare other Religions with Christianity. The *Greeks* and the rest of the *Pagans*, who are wont to magnifie their own things above measure; yet give us in but a very short Catalogue of such as suffered death for the sake of their Doctrine: Some *Gymnosophists*, *Socrates*, not many more, are all they can number. And in those eminent Men, it can scarce be denied, but that there might be some desire of transmitting the same to Posterity, which had a hand in the Business. But amongst those *Christians* that suffered *martyrdom* for their faith, there were very many of mean rank, of the common sort of People, such as were scarce ever taken

taken notice of, or known to their Neighbours that lived hard by them. There were Women also, Virgins, and young Men; such as had no desire nor any probable hope of getting renown in future times by their sufferings: According as in the Books of *Martyrs*, we find the Names but of a few in comparison of the whole *number* of those that were put to death, who are only registred *in gross*.

To which we must add, that by a small compliance and simulation, suppose by casting a little Frankincense upon the Altar, most of them might have freed themselves from such punishments. Which cannot be said of those Philosophers; who, whatsoever they might think secretly in their hearts, in all their apparent actions, conform'd themselves to the vulgar customs. So that, to have suffered death for the honour of God, cannot well be attributed to any other, but only the *Jews* and Christians. And not to the *Jews* neither, after the times of *Christ*; nor before them, but to a few, if they be compared with Christians. More of which suffered for the Law of *Christ* in some one Province; than the *Jews* ever did; whose patience in this kind, may all very near be reduced to the times of *Manasse*, and of *Antiochus*.

Wherefore, seeing Christian Religion in this particular also so vastly excells all other, it ought justly to be preferred before them. And from such a multitude of all kinds, and sexes of People, distinguish'd by so many several places and ages, as did not stick to die for this Religion; we may well gather, there was very great cause of such constancy: which cannot be imagined to be any other but the light of Truth, and the Spirit of GOD.

SECT.

S E C T. XXIV.

Answer to them that require more forcible Reasons.

Finally, if any yet be not satisfied with these *arguments* abovesaid, but desire more forcible *reasons* for confirmation of the *Christian Religion*; let such know, that according as things are divers, they must also have divers kinds of Proofs. Thus is there one way in *Mathematicks*, another in *Physicks*, a third in matters of advice and counsel; and lastly, another kind, when a *matter of fact* is in question: wherein verily we must rest content when the *testimonies* are free from all suspicion of untruth. Otherwise down goes not only all the use of *history*, and a great part of the *art* of *Physick*, but all the piety also that ought to be between Parents and Children, which cannot be known other ways. And indeed it is the pleasure of *Almighty God*, that those things which he would have us to *believe* (so that the very belief thereof may be imputed to us for obedience) should not so evidently *appear*, as those things which are apprehended by *sense* and plain *demonstration*; but only be so far forth *revealed* as may beget *faith*, and a persuasion thereof in the hearts and minds of such as are not *obstinate*: That so the Word of the *Gospel* may be as a *touchstone*, whereby Mens dispositions may be tried whether they be curable or not. For seeing these *arguments*, whereof we have spoken, have induced so many honest, godly, and wise Men to approve of this *Religion*, it is thereby plain

plain enough that the fault of other Mens *infidelity* is not for want of sufficient *testimony*, but because they would not have *that* to be had and embraced for *truth*, which is contrary to their affections and desires : It being, that is, an hard matter for them to make no great account of honours, and other worldly advantages ; which they must do, if they receive what Christ hath taught, and so become engaged to observe his Precepts. Which is discovered to be true by this very thing ; that they take many other Historical Narrations to be true ; which notwithstanding appear to be so meerly by authority : and not by any such foot-steps of them remaining at this day, as the History of *Christ* hath ; partly in the confession of the *Jews*, who are now in being, and partly in those things, which are every where found in the Assemblies of Christian People ; of which it must needs be granted there was some cause.

Lastly, seeing the long *duration* or continuance of *Christian Religion*, and the *large extent* thereof can be ascribed to no *humane power*, therefore it must be attributed to *miracles* : or if any deny that it came to pass through a *miraculous* manner ; this very getting so great strength and power without a *miracle*, may be justly thought to surpass any *miracle*.

The THIRD Book
OF THE
T R U T H
OF
Christian Religion.

S E C T. I.

*To prove the Authority of the Books of the
New Covenant.*

AFTER that a Man is once perswaded by the *reasons* above said, or is induced by any other *arguments* to believe that this *Religion* which *Christians* profess is the *truest*, and absolutely the *best*; if he desire to learn all the parts thereof, then must he have recourse unto the most *ancient writings* that contain the same *Religion*, which commonly we call the Books of the *New Testament*, or rather new *Covenant*.

For he is very unreasonable who denies this Religion to be contained in those Books, as all Christians affirm. Since it is but equity to believe every

every Sect; be it good, or be it bad; when it says its opinions are to be found in such or such a Book: as we believe the *Mahometans*, that the Religion of *Mahomet* is contained in the *Alcoran*.

Forasmuch then as we have before proved that the *Christian Religion* is most true; and it is manifest withal that it is contained in these Books, if there were no other ground, yet this alone is sufficient to prove and avouch the *Authority* of those Books.

But if any body requires a more particular demonstration of it, I must first lay down this Rule, which all indifferent Judges will allow; that it is incumbent upon him, who will impugn the authority of any writing received for many Ages, to produce Arguments which prove that Writing to be false: which if he cannot do, that Book is to be defended, as in possession of its Authority.

SECT. II.

Here is shewn that such Books were written by the Authors, whose names they have prefixed.

WE say then that those Books which are not in question amongst *Christians*, and carry before them a certain Name, are the very *Works* of those Authors whose names they bear; Because those *primitive Fathers*, *Justin*, *Irenaus*, *Clemens*, and others after them do
quote

quote those Books under these very names. As also because *Tertullian* witnesseth that there were *Original Copies* of some of those Books extant in his time. And besides, all the Churches received those Books for *authenticall*, before there were any common publick Meetings. Neither did ever the *Pagans* or *Jews* raise any controverſie about this, as if these were not the works of those Men, whose they were said to be : but *Julian* himself plainly confelleth that those were the writings of *Peter* and *Paul*, *Matthem*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, which *Christians* under those names have read and received. For as no Man in his wits can doubt that those Writings, which go under the names of *Homer* and *Virgil*, are truly theirs, because the one hath been so long time received among the *Latin*, and the other among the *Greek Authors* : In like manner, it were more absurd to bring the *Authors* of those Books in question, which are granted almost by all the *nations* in the world.

S E C T. III.

Some Books were anciently doubted of.

IN the Volume of the *New Covenant*, there are some Books indeed now received, which were not so received from the beginning, as the second *Epistle* of *St. Peter*, that of *St. James* and *Jude*, two of *St. John* the Elder, the *Revelation*, and the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* : Yet this is certain, that they were acknowledged by many Churches ; which appears sufficiently from hence, that the ancient *Christians* use their
Testimonies

Testimonies as Sacred : Which makes it credible that such *Churches* as from the beginning had not those Books, either were ignorant of them, or doubtful : Yet afterward when they were better informed touching the same, they admitted them into the *Canon* (as we now see) according to the example of other *Churches*.

Neither can any good reason be given why any Man should counterfeit those Books, since there is nothing comprised in them, neither can ought thence be collected which is not abundantly expressed in other *Books* unquestioned.

· S E C T. IV.

The Authority of such Books as have no Titles, is proved from the quality of the Writers.

AND here let no Man mistrust the *verity* of the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews*, because the Writer of it is unknown ; nor doubt of the two *Epistles* of *S. John* and the *Revelation*, because some Men do question, whether the *Author* of them was *John* the Apostle, or some other of that name ? For the *name* is not so much to be regarded as the *quality* or *condition* of Writers. Hence it is that we receive many Books of *History*, whose *Authors* are to us unknown ; As that concerning the *Alexandrian War* by *Cesar* : because we may perceive that whosoever writ the same, lived in those times, and was present when the things were done. In like manner it ought

ought to suffice us, that whosoever wrote the *Books* we speak of, both lived in the *primitive* Age, and were endued with *Apostolical* gifts. For if any body will say, that these qualities might be feigned, as the very Names might be in other Writings; he says that which is not credible, *viz.* that they who every where press the study of truth and piety, would for no cause at all make themselves guilty of the crime of forgery: which is not only detestable among all good Men, but by the *Roman Laws* was to be punished with death.

SECT. V.

These Pen-men writ the Truth, because they had certain knowledge of what they writ.

THIS therefore must be allowed, that the *Books* of the *New Covenant* were written by those *Authors*, whose Names they bear, or by such as bear sufficient witness of themselves: To which if we farther add, that they were also well acquainted with the *matters* whereof they wrote, and had no purpose to lye or dissemble, it will follow that the *things* which they committed to writing were both *certain* and *true*, because every untruth proceeds either from *ignorance*, or from a *wicked desire* to deceive.

As touching *Matthem, John, Peter* and *Jude*, they were all of the *society* and *fellowship* of those *Twelve* whom *Jesus* did chuse to be *witnesses* of his *Life* and *Doctrine*; so that they could not want notice of those things which they did re-

late. The same may be said of *James*, who was either an *Apostle*, or as some think, the next a-kin to *Jesus*, and by the *Apostles* consecrated *Bishop* of *Hierusalem*. *Paul* also could not err through lack of *knowledge*, about those *Points* which he professeth were revealed to him by *Jesus* himself reigning in *Heaven*; nor could he, or *Luke* either, who was an inseparable companion to him in his travels, be deceived about those things which were done by himself. This *Luke* might easily know the *certainty* of those things which he writ concerning the *Life* and *death* of *Jesus*: For he was born in the places next adjoining to *Palestina*; through which *Country* when he travelled, he saith he spake with such persons as were *eye-witnesses* of the things that were done. For doubtless besides the *Apostles* with whom he had familiarity, there lived many others at that time who had been *cured* by *Jesus*, and had seen him both *before* his *Death* and *after* his *Resurrection*.

If we will give credit to *Tacitus* and *Suetonius* in those things which happened a long time before they were born, because we are confident that they diligently enquired into the *truth* thereof; how much more ought we to believe *this Writer*, who saith that he received all the things which he relates from them that had seen the same.

It is credibly reported of *Mark*, that he was a constant companion with *Peter*, so that whatsoever he writ, are to be look'd upon as dictated by *Peter*, who could not be ignorant thereof. Besides, the same things that he writes are almost all extant in the *Writings* of the *Apostles*. Neither could the *Author* of the *Apocalypse* be deceived or deluded in those *Visions*, which he saith were
sent

sent unto him from *Heaven*. Nor he that writ the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* err in those things which he professeth, either to be *inspired* into him by the Spirit of *God*, or else *taught* him by the *Apostles*.

SECT VI.

As also because they would not lye.

THE other reason we spake of to prove the truth of the said Holy Writers, because they had no *will* to tell an untruth, is twisted with that which we handled above, when in general we proved the *truth* of *Christian Religion*, and of the *History* of the Resurrection of *Christ*.

Those that will accuse any Witnesses for the *pravity* of their *will*, must produce something by which it may be thought credible, their will might be diverted from uttering the *truth*: but this cannot be averred of the said *Authors*. For if any do object and say, that they acted in their own cause, and did their own business; we must see why this should be thought *their* cause and interest. Not that they might get any thing by it in this World, or thereby avoid any danger: when for the sake of this profession, they both lost all the goods of this World, and ventured upon all manner of dangers. This therefore was not *their* cause and interest, but only out of reverence to God: which sure doth not perswade Men to lye; especially in such a business, whereupon depends the everlasting Salvation of Mankind.

Such an impious piece of villainy we cannot believe they could be guilty of, if we consider either their Doctrines, every where most full of piety; or their life, which was never yet accused of any wicked deed: no not by their greatest Enemies, who objected nothing to them, but their want of learning and unskilfulness; which did not qualifie them sure for inventing falsehoods. And indeed, if there had been the least spice, as we speak, of fraud and cheating in them, they would not themselves have recorded their own faults, and preserved the memory of them: as of their all forsaking their Master when he was in danger, and *Peter's* denial of him three times.

S E C T. VII.

A Confirmation of the Fidelity of these Authors from the Miracles which they wrought.

ON the other side *God himself* gave illustrious testimonies of their *Fidelity* by working *wonders*, which either they or their Disciples with great boldness publickly avouched, adding also the names of the *persons*, places, and other circumstances: So that the *truth* or *falsehood* of their assertion might easily have been discovered by the *inquisition* of the *Magistrate*.

Amongst which it is worthy our observation, which they have most constantly delivered, both concerning the use of Tongues which they had never learned among many thousand Men; and their

their curing the *diseases* of the body upon a sudden in the sight of the People. Neither were they any whit dismayed with fear either of the *Jewish Magistrates* of those times, whom they knew to be most maliciously set against them; or of the *Romans*, who were far from having any good will to them, and, they were sure, would lay hold on any thing on which they might ground a charge of their being *inventors* of a new *Religion*: and yet neither *Jews* nor *Pagans*, in the times immediately following, durst ever deny, that *wonders* were wrought by those Men. Yea, the Miracles of *Peter* are mentioned by *Phlegon* in his *Annals*, who lived under *Adrian* the *Emperor*. Moreover the *Christians* themselves in those Books that contain a *reason* of their *faith*, which they exhibited to the *Emperors*, to the *Senate*, and to the *Governours*, do relate these things as most manifest and unquestionable *truths*: yea, they openly report that there continued a *wonderful vertue* of working strange effects at their *Sepulchres* for some *Ages* after their *Death*; which if it had been *false*, they knew that to their *shame* and *punishment* the *Magistrates* could have confuted it very easily. But there were such multitude of Miracles wrought at the *Sepulchres* I spoke of, and so many *Witnesses* of them, that they extorted even from *Porphyry* a confession of it.

SECT. VIII.

The Truth of the Writings confirmed from hence, that many things are found there which the event hath proved to be divinely revealed.

THESE things ought to suffice, but there are other Arguments which we may heap upon these, to prove the truth and fidelity of these *Authors Writings*. For many things are therein *foretold*, which were impossible for Men by their own power to know or bring to pass: yet we see the truth thereof wonderfully confirmed by the event.

Thus it was *foretold* that this Religion should upon a sudden have a large and ample increase; that it should continue for ever; and though it were rejected by most of the *Jews*, yet should it be imbraced by the *Gentiles*. Thus likewise was *foretold* what hatred and spight the *Jews* would bear against them that professed this Religion, and what grievous Persecutions they should undergo: The Siege also and destruction both of *Hierusalem*, and of the Temple, together with the miserable Calamities of the Jewish Nation,

S E C T. IX.

As also from God's Care in preserving his People from false writings.

BESIDES this, if it be granted that God out of his *providence* takes care of humane affairs, specially such as belong to his *honour* and worship; then it cannot be that he should suffer so great a *multitude* of Men, who had no other design but to worship God after a holy manner, to be cheated with lying Books. And forasmuch as since the time that so many *Sects* have sprung up in *Christianity*, there hath not been one that received not either *all* or the *most* of those *Books*, (excepting some few that contain no singular matter differing from the rest) it is a great argument that no material thing could be objected against these *writings*; specially since the said *Sects* were so partial and spitefully bent against each other, that what one approved, others rejected, even for this reason, because it was there approved.

S E C T. X.

Answer to the Objection, That divers Books were not received by all.

THERE were some indeed, though very few, among those that would be called Christians, who rejected all those Books, which
G 4 they

they saw contradicted their peculiar Opinions. Such, for instance, as out of hatred of the *Jews* reviled their *God*, the Maker of the World; and the *Law* which he had given them: or on the other side, such as for fear of the evils which Christians were to undergo, chose to lurk and lie hid under the name of *Jews*; who had liberty, without any danger, to profess their Religion. But these very Men were renounced, in those times, by all other Christians throughout the World: when as yet all that differed in their opinions, with the safety of piety, were tolerated, by the order of the Apostles, with great patience. As for the former kind of these adulterate *Christians*, I think they have been sufficiently confuted, both by that which we have said before, when we proved that *there was but one only true God*, the sole framer of the whole World; As also by those very *Books*, which that they might have some semblance of *Christians*, they did admit of, specially the *Gospel of Luke*: wherein is evidently shewn that the same *God* whom *Moses* and the *Hebrews* worshipped, was preached by *Christ*. And the other sort we shall more fitly confute, when we come to oppugn those that both are and would be called *Jews*. For the present only this I say, that their impudence is wonderful great, who slight and extenuate the authority of *Paul*; seeing there was not one of all the *Apostles*, that founded and taught more *Churches* than he did: and his Miracles were at that time reported to be exceeding numerous, when (as e'rewhile we said) there might easily have been trial, and enquiry made of the truth of the matter. If then it be true that he wrought *wonders*, why may we not believe him concerning

ing his *Heavenly Visions*, and *instruction* received from *Christ* himself? to whom if he was so dear, it cannot be that he should teach any thing inglorious or ingrateful unto *Christ*, as *falsities* or untruths would have been. And as touching that particular, which is the only thing whereof they accuse him, namely his *doctrine* of the liberty and freedom which was purchased for the *Hebrews* from those Rites and Ceremonies that were formerly commanded them by *MOSES*; He had no reason at all to teach it, but only the truth of the thing which he asserted. For he himself was both circumcised, and did also of his own accord observe very many things which the Law enjoined. And then for the sake of the Christian Religion, he both did more difficult and suffered harder things than the Law required, or could be expected upon the account of the Law; and taught also his *Disciples* to do and suffer the like. Whence it appears that he uttered no flattering or enticing speeches unto his *auditors*; who were taught instead of the *Sabbath*, to keep every day *holy* for divine *worship*, and instead of the little expences which the *Law* required to suffer the loss of all their goods, and instead of the *bloud* of Beasts, to consecrate their own *bloud* unto *God*. And further, *Paul* himself plainly affirms, that *Peter*, *John*, and *James*, in token of their consent with him, gave him the *right hands* of fellowship: which he never durst have spoken, if it had not been true, because the same Men being then alive might have *convicted* him for a liar.

These therefore (of whom I have now spoken) being excluded, as scarce deserving the name of *Christians*; the most manifest consent of so many

many Congregations of Christians, who received these Books, added to what hath been spoken of the Miracles which the Writers of them wrought, and the singular care which God takes about matters of this kind, ought to be sufficient to induce any indifferent Men to give *credit* thereunto: specially considering that they are wont commonly to credit any other Books of *History*, which have no such testimonies; unless they see some plain reason to the contrary, which cannot be said of any of those Books whereof we have spoken.

S E C T. XI.

Answer to an Objection, That these Books seem to contain things impossible.

FOR if any body say, that some things are related in these Books, which are impossible to be done; the Objection vanishes, when we consider what hath been before discoursed; that there are things which cannot indeed be done by Men, but are possible with God (such, that is, as include in themselves no repugnancy or contradiction, as we speak) and that in the number of such things, are even those Miraculous powers which we most of all admire, and the recalling of the Dead to Life again.

S E C T. XII.

Or things contrary to Reason.

NEITHER are they to be more regarded, who say that some *doctrines* are comprised in these *Books* which are disagreeing to right *reason*: For this is confuted first by such a vast multitude of Men who wanted no wit, learning or wisdom, as have followed the authority of these Books, ever since the first times. And then all those things which were shewn in the first Book to be consonant to right reason; for instance, *that there is one God*, who alone is absolutely perfect, infinite in vertue, life, wisdom, and goodness, of whom all things that have any being were made: whose care and providence reacheth over all his works, especially unto Men; and who can after this life bountifully reward all them that obey him: and that we ought to bridle our sensual appetites: that amongst Men there is *kindred* and alliance, and therefore they ought to love one another with sincere affection; All these you shall find most plainly delivered in these Books. But to assert any thing for certain beyond these, either about the nature of God, or about his will, by the mere conduct of humane reason, the contrary resolutions, not only of the Schools among themselves, but of particular Philosophers, may teach us how unsafe and fallacious it is.

And it is no marvel: for if Men do so far disagree in their opinions, when they dispute about the nature of their own *Soul*, then they must

must needs much more dissent, when they go about to determine any thing not revealed concerning the *highest mind*, and the most supreme *Spirit* which so far transcends our weak apprehension. If (as prudent Men are wont to say) to enquire into the *Counsels* of Kings be *dangerous*, and not to be attempted or *attained* by us; who then is there so sagacious, that he should hope to be able by his own conjecture to find out what God's Will is in those things, which he may will freely as he pleases? Wherefore *Plato* said very well, that none of these hidden *mysteries* could be known without an *Oracle*. Now there can no *Oracle* be proved to be an *Oracle* indeed by any clearer *testimonies* than those that are contained in the said *Books* of the *new covenant*. It is so far from being proved, that it is not so much as asserted, that God did ever reveal any thing to Men concerning his *nature*, which was repugnant to these Books: Nor can there any later signification of his *will*, which is credible, be produced. For if there was any thing otherwise commanded or permitted before the times of *Christ*, in such matters as are either plainly indifferent, or not at all in themselves due, nor plainly dishonest, it makes nothing against these Books; since that in such matters the later laws annul the former.

S E C T. XIII.

Answer to an Objection, That some of these Books are repugnant to the other.

T H E R E are those who are wont further to object against these Books, that there is sometime a certain disagreement in their sense. But, quite contrary, whosoever will judge of this matter with an indifferent mind, shall find this also may be added to the arguments for the authority of these Books, that we do most manifestly and apparently agree about such things as concern any weighty point of doctrine or history : Which consent and accord cannot elsewhere be found among any other Writers that are of one and the same sect or profession, whether we consider the Jews or the Greek Philosophers, the Physicians or the Roman Lawyers. All which do not only differ much among themselves, yea, even those that are of the same sect, as Plato and Xenophon ; but oftentimes one shall find the same Writer to affirm now one thing, then another, as if he were forgetful of himself, or knew not what to resolve upon. But these Writers, of whom we speak, do inculcate and express the same points of faith ; they deliver the same Commandments ; and as for their narration of the life, and death, and resurrection of Christ, the Sum and substance in them all is the very same.

As touching some small circumstances, which make nothing to the main matter, they might happily have admitted a very easie reconciliation ;

tion ; though we now do not know it, because of the likeness of things done at divers times, the ambiguity of names, or more names than one of the same Man or Place, and such like things. Nay this very thing ought to vindicate and free these *Writers* from all suspicion of *falsehood* ; it being usual with those that would have lyes and untruths credited, to relate all *circumstances* by compact and agreement, so as there shall not appear any colour or shew of *difference*. Or if it be so, that for any small *difference*, which cannot so exactly be reconciled, a whole Book shall lose its credit ; then we must believe no *Books* at all, specially those of *History* : yet we see that *Polybins*, *Halicarnassensis*, *Livy*, and *Plutarch*, for the *substance* of them are esteemed *authentic* and *true*, though in some *circumstances* they do not agree : Which makes it the more equal and just, that no such thing should destroy their credit, who we see by their very Writings were always most studious of *Piety* and *Truth*.

S E C T. XIV.

Answer to an Objection, taken from outward Testimonies, which make more for these Books.

THERE remains another way of overthrowing a Testimony, which is by producing contrary Testimonies out of other Authors.

But

But I dare boldly say, that there are no such *testimonies* to be found, unless a Man will produce the *sayings* of them that were *born* a long time after, and of such also as did so openly profess *enmity* against *Christianity*, that they could be no fit *Witnesses* in this matter.

Nay, on the contrary, if need were, we could alledge many *testimonies* to confirm divers parts of the *history* which is delivered in the said *Books*. Thus both *Hebrews* and *Pagans* report that *Jesus* was crucified, and that sundry *miracles* were done by him and his *Disciples*. Those most famous Books of *Josephus*, which were set forth about Forty Years after *Christ's* Ascension, do make mention of *Herod*, *Pilate*, *Festus*, *Felix*, *John the Baptist*, *Gamaliel*, and of the *destruction* of *Hierusalem* at large. Herewithal agree that which the Authors of the *Talmud* have recorded concerning *those times*. *Tacitus* relates how cruelly *Nero* used the *Christians*. And anciently there were certain *Books* extant, not only of private Men, as of *Phlegon*, and others; but also some publick *Acts*, whereunto the *Christians* appealed, for that in them there was mention made of the *Star* that appeared at *Christ's* Nativity, and also of the Earthquake and Eclipse of the *Sun* (against the course of Nature, it being then full Moon) at the time of *Christ's* Passion upon the Cross.

S E C T. XV.

Answer to the Objection, That the Scriptures were changed.

NOW what can be farther objected against these Books, I see not, unless it be said that they remained not altogether *the same* that they were from the beginning. And indeed it must be granted, that what is *common* to other Books might happen, nay did happen to *those*; namely, that by the carelessness, or the perverse care of the *Transcribers*, some Letters, syllables or words might be changed, left out, or added. But it is an *unjust thing* to bring in question the *truth* of such a *Book*, or *evidence* only, because in so many *ages* there could not but be great variety of *Copies*, since both custom and reason requires, that what appears in the most, and most ancient Copies, be preferred to the rest. But that either by fraud or any other way, all the Copies were corrupted, and that in point of doctrine, or some remarkable piece of History, will never be proved: for there are neither any evidences, nor any witnesses of those times, which attest it. But if, as was said before, there be any thing urged, in much later times, by those who bare an implacable hatred to the Disciples of these Books; that ought to be look'd upon as a Reproach, not as a Testimony.

And this truly, which we have said, may be well thought a sufficient Answer to those, who object a change in the Scripture; for he who affirms that, especially against a writing which
hath

hath been long, and in abundance of places, received, ought himself to prove his Charge. But to make the vanity of this Objection more fully appear, we will shew, that what they feign, neither was, nor could be done.

We have proved before, that the Books were written by the Authors whose Names they bear: Which being granted, it follows, that other Books were not foisted into their room, nor was any notable part of them changed. For, since that change must needs have some design, that part would notoriously differ from the other Parts and Books which were not changed; which cannot now any where be discerned: Nay, there is an admirable agreement, as we said, in their Senses.

Besides, as soon as any of the Apostles or Apostolical Men published any thing, there is no doubt to be made, but Christians, with great diligence, (as became their piety, and care to preserve and propagate truth to Posterity) took from thence many Copies for their use: Which therefore were dispersed as far as the Christian Name, through *Europe, Asia and Egypt*; in which places the *Greek* Language was spoken.

And more than this, the Original Copies also, as we said before, were preserved till two Hundred Years after *Christ*. Now it was not possible that any Book, diffused into so many Copies, and kept, not only by the private diligence of particular Persons, but the common care of the Churches, should be altered by the hand of any falsifier. Add further, that these Books, in the following Ages, were translated into the *Syriack, Ethiopick, Arabick and Latin* Tongues: Which *Translations* are yet extant; and do not differ in

any thing of moment from the *Greek Copies* themselves.

Besides, we have the *Writings* of those Men, who were taught by the Apostles themselves, or by their *Disciples*, wherein many places are cited out of these *Books*, to the same sense and meaning which now we read them. Neither was there any in the *Church* of so great *authority* in those times, as to have met with obedience, if he would have changed any thing : As is plain enough by the free and open dissent of *Irenaus*, *Tertullian* and *Cyprian*, from those that were most eminent in the *Church*. After which times there succeeded many other *Men*, of great Learning and Judgment, who having first made diligent enquiry thereof, received these *Books*, as retaining their *original* purity. Hitherto also may be referred what but now we said of divers *Seets* of *Christians*; all which, at least such as acknowledged God to be the Maker of the World, and Christ to be the Author of a new Law, did receive and use these *Books* accordingly as we do the same. And if any had attempted to *alter*, or put any thing new into any part thereof, they should have been accused by the rest for *forgery* and *false-dealing* therein. Neither was there ever any *Seet* that had the liberty, at their pleasure, to *alter* any of these *Books* for their own turns : For it is manifest, that all of them did draw their *arguments*, one against another, out of the same. And as for that which we touched concerning *Divine Providence*, it belongs no less unto the *chiefest parts*, than unto the *whole Books*; namely, that it is not agreeable to it, that *GOD* should suffer so many *Thousand Men*, which sincerely desired to be *godly*, and earnestly sought after *eternal life*, to be

be led headlong into that *error* which they could no way *avoid*. And thus much shall suffice to be spoken for the *authority* of the *Books* of the *New Covenant*, whence alone, if there were no other helps, we might be sufficiently instructed concerning the *true Religion*.

SECT. XVI.

For the Authority of the Books of the Old Testament.

NOW, forasmuch as it hath pleased *God* to leave us also the *writings* and *evidences* of the *Jewish Religion*, which was anciently the true, and affords no small *testimonies* for *Christianity*; therefore it will not be amiss, in the next place, to justify the *authority* of the same. First then, That these *Books* were written by the same Men, whose Names they bear, is manifest in like manner as we have proved of *ours* before, of the *New Covenant*.

These *Authors* were either *Prophets*, or other very *faithful* and *credible Men*, such as was *Esdra*s, who is thought to have collected the *Books* of the *Old Testament* into one Volume, during the life-time of the *Prophets Haggai*, *Malachi* and *Zachary*. I will not here repeat again what is said before, in the *commendation* of *Moses*. Both that part of *Histry*, which at first was delivered by *him*, as we have shewn in the first *Book*; and that also which was collected after his time is witnessed even by many of the *Heathen*. Thus the *Annals* of the *Phœnicians* have recorded

the names of *David* and *Solomon*, and their *Leagues* with the Men of *Tyre*. As well *Berosus*, as the *Hebrew* Writers, makes mention of *Nebuchadonosor*, and of other *Chaldean* Kings. He whom *Jeremy* calls *Vaphres*, King of *Egypt*, is termed *Apries* by *Herodotus*. In like manner the Books of the *Grecians* are replenished with Narrations concerning *Cyrus* and his Successors, until the times of *Darius*. And many other things concerning the Nation of the *Jews* are related by *Josephus*, in his Books against *Apion*: Whereunto we may add what before we have touched out of *Strabo* and *Trogus*. But as for us *Christians*, we cannot in the least doubt of the truth of these Books, out of every one of which almost there are testimonies extant in our Books, which are found likewise in the *Hebrew*. Neither do we find, when *Christ* reprehended many things in the *Doctors* of the *Law* and *Pharisees* of his time, that ever he accused them of *Forgery* committed against the Writings of *Moses*, or the *Prophets*; or that they used counterfeit Books, or such as were changed.

Then, after *Christ's* time, it cannot be proved, neither is it credible, that the *Scripture* was corrupted in matters of any moment, if we consider rightly how far and wide, over the face of the Earth, the Nation of the *Jews* was spread, who every where were the Keepers of these Books. For, first of all, the Ten Tribes were led away captive by the *Affyrians*, into *Media*; then afterward the two other Tribes: And many of these also, after *Cyrus* granted them liberty to return, settled themselves in foreign Countries. The *Macedonians* invited them, with great promises, to come into *Alexandria*. The cruelty of
Antiochus,

Antiochus, the Civil Wars of the *Macchabees*, together with those of *Pompey* and *Sossius* from without, did disperse and scatter abroad many of them. The parts of *Africa* about *Cyrene*, were full of the *Jews*; so were the Cities of *Asia*, *Macedonia*, *Lycania*; and likewise the Isles of *Cyprus*, *Crete*, and others. Also what a number of them there was at *Rome*, may be learned out of *Horace*, *Juvenal* and *Martial*. Now it is not possible that such Multitudes, so far distant one from another, should be cozened in this kind; neither could they ever accord all in the coining of an *untruth*. Add moreover, that almost Three Hundred Years before *Christ*, at the appointment and care of the Kings of *Egypt*, those Books of the *Hebrews* were translated into the *Greek* Tongue, by those that are called the *Seventy Interpreters*. So as then the *Grecians* had the sense and substance of them, though in another Language; whereby they were the less liable to be changed. Nay more; these Books were translated both into the *Chaldee* Tongue, and into that of *Jerusalem*, that is, the half *Syriack*, a little before, and a little after the time of *Christ*. Other *Greek* Translations afterward there were; as, namely, by *Aquila*, *Symmachus* and *Theodotion*; all which *Origen* compared with that of the *Seventy Interpreters*; and after him, others also; who could find no diversity of *history*, or of any matter worth speaking of.

Philo lived in the Reign of *Caligula*, and *Josephus* survived the times of both the *Vespasians*; Which two *Writers* alledge out of the *Hebrew* Books the same things that we read at this day.

Now in these very times began *Christian Religion* to be more and more propagated, being

professed by many of the *Hebrews*, and by sundry Persons that had learned the *Hebrew* Tongue; who, if the *Jews* had falsified in any notable part, could have quickly discovered it, by comparing more ancient Copies; and so have made it publickly known. But they are so far from doing this, that, on the other side, they alledge many *testimonies* out of the old *Covenant*, to the same sense and meaning that they are used by the *Hebrews*: Which *Hebrews* may sooner be accused of any other fault, than (I will not say falshood, but of so much as) negligence about these Books; which they have so religiously and exactly described and compared, that they know how often any one Letter is found therein.

The last, though not the least *argument*, to prove that the *Jews* did not purposely corrupt or alter the Scripture, may be, because the *Christians*, out of the very Books which are read by the *Jews*, do evince, and, as they trust, very strongly, that their Lord and Master *Jesus* is that same very *Messias* which was anciently promised to the *Jews*, their Fore-Fathers. Which, above all things, the *Jews* would have taken care should not have been done, when the *controversie* arose between them and the *Christians*, if ever it had been in their power to have changed what they listed.

The FOURTH Book
OF THE
T R U T H
OF
Christian Religion.

S E C T. I.

*A particular Confutation of the Religions
opposite to Christianity.*

THE *Fourth* Book beginning with that pleasure which many Men are wont to take, in beholding the danger wherein others are, while they are in none themselves; shews, that it ought to be the greatest pleasure of a Christian Man in this life, not only to rejoyce and bless himself that he hath found out the Truth, but to lend his help also to others that wander up and down in the Labyrinths of Error; and to make them partakers of so great a benefit.

Which we in some measure have endeavoured to do in the former Books: (the demonstration
H 4 of

of that which is true, containing in it self the confutation of what is false) yet in regard that all kinds of Religions which oppose themselves to the Christian, viz. *Paganism*, *Judaism* and *Mahometism*, besides that which is common to all, have certain errors proper to every one of them, and their peculiar Arguments which they are wont to oppose us withal. It will not be amiss to make a particular Disputation against every one of these; first beseeching the Readers to free their Judgments from leaning to a Party, and from long custom and prejudice, (as impediments of a good mind) that with the greater indifferency they may take cognizance of what shall be said.

SECT. II.

And first of Paganism, that there is but one God. Created Spirits are good or bad: the good not to be honoured, but as the most high God directs.

TO begin then against *Pagans*: If they say that there are divers eternal and co-equal Gods, we have confuted this Opinion before, in the first Book, where we taught that *there is but only one God*, who is the cause of all things. Or if they, by the name of Gods, do understand the created Spirits which are superior to Men, they then either mean the good, or the bad: If they say the good, first they ought to be well assured that such are so indeed, otherwise they commit a dangerous

dangerous error, in receiving *Enemies* instead of *Friends*, and *Traytors* for *Ambassadors*. Then it were but reason that they should, in their very worship, make an evident difference between the most high God, and those Spirits; and likewise be satisfied what order there is among them, what good may be expected from each of them, and what honour the most High is willing should be bestowed on every one of them. All which being wanting in their Religion, it is plain from thence how uncertain that *Religion* is, and how it were a safer course for them to betake themselves to the worship of one *Almighty God*; which even *Plato* confessed was the duty of every wise Man; specially for that to whomsoever *God* is propitious and favourable, to them these good *Angels* must needs be serviceable and gracious, being the Ministers and Servants of the most High.

S E C T. III.

Evil Spirits adored by Pagans, and how impious a thing it is.

BUT it was the bad, not the good *Spirits*, which the *Pagans* did worship; as may be proved by weighty reasons: First, Because these adored *Angels* did not throw off their worshippers, unto the service of the true *God*; but, as much as in them lay, laboured to abolish the same; or, at least, in every respect, required equal honour with the *Almighty*. Secondly, Because they procured all the mischief they could to the worshippers of the One most High God, by provoking
both

both Magistrates and People to inflict punishments upon them. For when it was lawful for *Poets* to sing of the murders and adulteries committed by the *Gods*, and for the *Epicures* to take away all *divine Providence*, and any other *Religion* (though never so different in Rites) was allowed; as the *Egyptian*, the *Phrygian*, the *Grecian*, the *Thuscan*, and the sacred Rites of *Rome*; even then generally the *Jews* alone were made ridiculous, as appears by *Satyrs* and *Epigrams* written upon them; and sometimes also suffered banishment. And as for *Christians*, they were afflicted with most cruel punishments: No other cause whereof can be given, than that both these *Sects* did worship one God, whose honour was impeached by the multitude of such *Gods* as the *Heathen* adored; who did not so much vie one with another, as with Him.

Thirdly, This was manifest by the manner of their worship, which no way beseemed any good and honest *Spirit*; namely, by humane blood; by the running of naked Men in the Temples; by Pageants and dancings, full of nasty filthiness; such as may be seen at this day among some People of *America* and *Africa*, who yet sit in the darkness of *Gentilism*.

Yea, which is more, there both anciently were, and now are, People who worship'd evil Spirits, which they knew and professed to be such: As, the *Persians*, *Arimanius*; the *Greeks*, those they called *Cacodemons*; the *Latins*, their *Vejoves*; and now some *Ethiopians* and *Indians*, such like Deities; than which, nothing can be imagined more impious. For, what is religious worship but a testimony of an infinite goodness, that a Man doth acknowledge to be in him whom he worshippeth?

Which

Which if it be exhibited unto a bad *Spirit*, it is false and deceitful, implying in it no less crime than *high treason*; forasmuch as the *honour* due unto the King is not only withdrawn from him, but is conferred upon his Enemy, and one that hath traiterously revolted from him. Moreover, vain is that persuasion which they conceive of *G O D*, that *he is good*, and therefore will *not punish* this offence; because they think, so to do were contrary to his *goodness*: For mercy or *clemency*, that it may be just, hath its bounds and limits; and where *wickedness* abounds beyond measure, there *justice* doth, as it were, necessarily require the infliction of *punishment*. Neither is it less blameable, that they pretend Fear constrains them to honour wicked Spirits; since He that is perfectly good is as communicative also, and therefore the Author of all other Natures, which are his productions. And if he be, then it follows that he hath *absolute* power and dominion over all *creatures*, as over his workmanship; so that nothing can be done by *any* of them, which he hath a *desire* to hinder. Which things being certainly true, we may easily gather, that evil Spirits can no further do any hurt to him who hath God, most high, and most transcendently good, favourable to him, than that God, for the sake of some good or other, shall think fit to permit.

Nor can a Man obtain any thing of those evil Spirits by his Prayers, which is not to be rejected; because he that is evil is then worst of all, when he feigns himself to be good: And the gifts of Enemies are mere snares and treacheries.

SECT. IV.

Against the Worship which, in Paganism, is exhibited to Men after their Death.

Moreover, there were heretofore, and now also are *Pagans*, that tell us, they give honour and *worship* to the *Souls* of *Men* departed. But first they should have here also made some manifest distinction between this *honour*, and that which is *due* unto the most high *God*. Then again, all *Prayers* made to them are but vain and fruitless, unless those *Spirits* were able to give us something; of which their worshippers have no certainty: Nor is there any more ground to say that they can, than that they cannot. But another thing is worst of all, to wit, that many of them to whom such *glory* is given by the *Heathen*, in their life-time were notoriously *wicked*, and addicted to one filthy *vice* or other: Thus *Bacchus* was a Drunkard, and *Hercules* effeminate; *Romulus* proved a very Villain to his Brother, and *Jupiter* a Traytor to his own Father. So that their honour redounds to the disgrace of the true *GOD*, and of *Vertue*, which he loves; whilst *Vices*, which are inticing enough of themselves, it recommends to Men by Religion.

SECT. V.

Against worshipping of Stars and Elements.

OF more antiquity than this was the worshipping of *Stars*, and of the *Elements*; as Fire, Water, Air and Earth; wherein great *ignorance* and *folly* was committed. For *Prayers* are the greatest part of *religious worship*, which cannot, without folly, be directed to any object, save to *intelligent natures*: But Sense tells us, that the *Elements* (as we call them) are no such things: And as for the *Stars*, if any say they are, he will never be able to prove it, since that no such matter can be collected from their operations and *influences*, which demonstrate their nature; but rather we may gather the contrary by their *motion*, which is not variable, like to that in things endued with *liberty of will*, but *constant* and unalterable. Besides, we have shewn before, that the course and motion of the *Stars* is appointed for the use of *Men*; whence Man ought to acknowledge himself to be both liker to God than they, in his better part; as also more dear unto him: And therefore much injury should he do to his own worth and dignity, if he submit himself to such things as God hath given to be *serviceable* unto him; whereas, on the contrary, he ought rather to *render thanks* for them which cannot do, or it is not proved can do so much for themselves.

SECT VI.

Against worshipping of Brute Beasts.

BUT nothing is so unworthy as this, that Men, especially the *Egyptians*, sunk at length into such a sottishness, as to worship brute Beasts. For though in some of them there appears some shadow, as we may call it, of understanding; yet that understanding is nothing, if we compare it with Man's: For they can neither express their inward conceptions by distinct words, or by writing; nor do works of divers kinds, no nor works of the same kind after divers manners: much less can they attain to the knowledge of numbers, dimensions, and the celestial motions. Whereas, on the other side, Man, by the force and diligence of his wit, catches all manner of Animals, though never so strong; whether wild Beasts, Birds, or Fishes; and so masters them, that, in some measure, he makes them subject to his Laws; as Elephants, Lyons, Horses and Oxen. Yea, from those which are hurtful, he draws to himself some profit; as Medicines from Serpents: And hath this use and benefit from them all, (which is utterly unknown to them) that he contemplates the composition of their bodies, the situation of their parts; and comparing both their species and their kinds, one with another, learns from thence also his own dignity; as much as the structure of Man's body is more perfect and noble, than that of the rest. Which things, if any Man rightly consider, he will be so far from considering other living Creatures

tures as Gods, that he will rather look upon himself as constituted by the most High God, a kind of God over them.

S E C T. VII.

Against worshipping of things that are no Substances.

WE find also that the *Grecians, Romans*, and others, worshipped those things which have no subsistence, but are mere Accidents of other things.

For, to omit those *uncouth Deities*, the *Fever*, *Dame Impudence*, and the like, let us name the better sort: Such were *Health*, which is nothing but a right temperature of the parts of the body: *Good Fortune*, which is an event that is correspondent to a Man's desire: The *Affections* also, such as love, fear, anger, hope, and the rest; which proceed from the consideration of something that is good or evil, easie or difficult; are *certain motions or passions* in that part of the mind which is united to the body, by the blood especially; not having any absolute power of themselves, but are subordinate *hand-maids* to the commands of the will, their *Mistress*, at least in their continuance and direction. Then for Vertues, whose Names are divers; *Prudence*, in chusing what is profitable for us: *Fortitude*, in undertaking dangers: *Justice*, in abstaining from that which is another Man's: *Temperance*, in the moderation of pleasures, &c. They are certain inclinations and propensions in the mind unto that which is right,

right, grown up by long exercise and practice; which, as they may be augmented in a Man; so may they by neglect be diminished; nay, quite lost and abolished. As for *Honour* (whereunto we read there were Temples dedicated) it is other Men's judgment, or good opinion, concerning one whom they supposed endued with Vertue; which is often bestowed upon bad Men, as well as good, by the natural proneness there is in Men to err in their judgment.

These therefore having no subsistence, and therefore not to be compared, in dignity and worth, with things that do subsist, nor having any understanding of Men's prayers or veneration, it is most absurd and unreasonable to worship them as Gods; when for this very thing He is to be worshipped, who can both give and preserve them.

SECT. VIII.

Answer to the Argument of the Gentiles taken from Miracles done among them.

THE *Pagans*, for the commendation of their Religion, are wont to alledge *Miracles*; but such as in many things may be excepted against.

For the wisest Men among the *Pagans* rejected many of these, as supported by no testimony of any credible witness; but plainly counterfeit and fabulous. Other Miracles which they said were done, hapned in some secret place, in the night, before one or two, whose eyes the craft of the Priests might easily delude by false shews and

and appearances of things. And there are others which raised great admiration, and passed for wonders, meerly because they met with those who were ignorant of natural things; especially of hidden properties. As for instance, such a thing might happen, if one should draw Iron with the Loadstone, among People who knew nothing of its vertue: in which arts *Simon Magus*, and *Appollonius*, as many have recorded, were very skilful.

I do not deny, but some things greater than these were seen, which by Man's power alone could not be drawn out of natural causes; and yet did not need a power which was truly divine; that is, omnipotent: but might be performed by Spirits that are placed between God and Men. Who by their celerity, efficacy, subtilty and diligence can easily carry things far distant from one place to another; and compound things that are very different, to the working of such effects as shall strike Men with astonishment. But that the Spirits, whereby this was effected, were not good, and therefore neither was the Religion good; appears already from what hath been said before. And from hence also, that they said they were compelled to do things, even against their wills, by the power of certain charms: when the wisest of the *Pagans* agree that there can be no such vertue in words; but only a power of perswasion, and that no other way than by their signification.

And it is another token of their wickedness, that they undertook to allure and draw this or that body, though never so backward to it, into the love of such or such a Person. Wherein they were injurious to them; either in their vain
I promises

promises, or in effecting what they promised: for this also is forbidden by humane Laws, as a piece of Sorcery. Neither need any Man wonder why God suffered some *marvels* to be wrought by evil *Spirits* among the *Gentiles*, seeing they deserved to be cheated with such illusions, who so long time had forsaken the worship of the *true God*.

Moreover this is an argument of their *weakness* and impotency, that their *works* never brought any considerable good along with them. For if any seem'd to be call'd back to life after they were dead, they did not continue alive; neither could they exercise the *functions* of living Creatures. Or if it happened, that any thing proceeding happily from a *divine power*, did appear to the *Pagans*; yet the same was not foretold should come to pass for the confirmation of their *Religion*, and therefore there might be other causes, and far different reasons, which the divine efficacy propounded to it self in the doing those things. As for example, if it was true, that *Vespasian* restored sight to one blind; this was done, that he being thereby made more venerable, might the more easily obtain the *Roman Empire*: to which he was chosen by God, that he might be a minister of his Judgments upon the *Jews*. More such like causes there may be of other *wonders*, which had no relation at all to their *Religion*.

SECT,

S E C T. IX

And from Oracles.

THE very same likewise, in a manner, may serve for answer to that which they object concerning *Oracles*; especially what we have said that these Men did worthily deserve to be *deluded*, for contempt of that *knowledge* which reason or ancient tradition suggested to every one of them. Then again the words of the *Oracles*, for the most part were *ambiguous*, and might easily receive an interpretation, from any event whatsoever. Or if there was any thing more expressly foretold by them, yet it is not necessary that it should proceed from an *all-knowing Mind*: For it was either such a thing as might be foreseen by *natural causes* then existing, as some *Physicians* have foretold Diseases that are a coming; or else some probable conjecture might be made by that which commonly falls out, and usually comes to pass, as we read of some *persons* well skill'd in civil affairs, that have made notable guesses at *future events*. Again, suppose that amongst the *Pagans*, God sometimes used the *ministry* of some *Prophets* to foretel those things, which could have no certain *cause* besides the *will* of God; yet this did not approve or confirm their *heathenish Religion*, but rather overthrew it. Such for instance are those things, in the fourth Eclogue of *Virgil*, taken out of the *Sibyls Verses*; where unwittingly the *Poet* gives us a lively description of the coming of *Christ*, and his benefits. So in the same Books of the *Sibyls* it was,

that he ought to be acknowledg'd as King, who should be our King indeed: and that he was to come out of the East, who should have *dominion* over all. We read in *Porphyry* of the *Oracle* of *Apollo*, which saith, that other *Gods* are aerial *Spirits*, but the *God* of the *Hebrews* is only to be worshipped: which saying, if the worshippers of *Apollo* obey, then they must cease to worship him: if they do not obey it, then they make their *God* a lyar. Add farther, if those *Spirits* had respected or intended the good of Mankind, above all things, they would have prescribed a general Rule of life to Mankind, and also given some certain assurance of a *reward* to them that lived accordingly; neither of which was ever done by them.

On the other side oftentimes in their Verses we find some *Kings* commended which were wicked Men, some *Champions* extoll'd and dignifi'd with divine honour, others allured to immodest and unlawful love, or to the seeking after filthy lucre, or committing of Murder, as might be shewn by many examples.

SECT. X.

Paganism decayed of its own accord so soon as humane aid ceased.

BESIDES all that hath hitherto been said *Paganism* ministers to us a mighty argument against it self; because that wheresoever it becomes destitute of *humane* force to support it there straitway it comes to *ruine*, as if the
foundations

foundation thereof were quite overthrown. For if we take a view of all the Kingdoms and States that are among *Christians* or *Mahumetans*, we shall find no memory of *Paganism*, but in *Books*. *Nay Histories* tell us, that even in those times, when the Emperors endeavoured to uphold the *Pagan Religion* either by violence and persecution, as did the first of them; or by learning and subtilty, as did *Julian*; it notwithstanding decay'd daily, not by any violent opposition, nor by the brightness and splendor of lineage and descent, (for Jesus was accounted by the common sort only a Carpenter's Son;) nor by the flourish of learning, which they that taught the Law of *Christ* used not in their Sermons; nor by gifts and bribes, for they were poor; nor by any soothing and flattering speeches, for on the contrary they taught that all worldly advantages must be despised, and that all kind of adversity must be undergone for the *Gospel's* sake. See then how weak and impotent *Paganism* was, which by such means came to ruine.

Neither did the *Doctrine* of *Christ* only make the credulity of the Gentiles to vanish, but even bad *Spirits* came out of divers bodies at the name of *Christ*: they became *dumb* also, and being demanded the reason of their silence, they were compell'd to say, they were able to do nothing where the name of *Christ* was called upon.

S E C T. XI.

Answer to the Opinion of some that think the beginning and decay of Religions depend upon the efficacy of the Stars.

THERE have been *Philosophers*, that did ascribe the beginning and decay of every *Religion* unto the Stars : but this Star-gazing Science, which these Men profess to be skilled in, is delivered under such different rules, that one can be certain of nothing but only this, that there is no certainty at all therein.

I do not here speak of such effects as follow from a natural necessity of causes, but of those that proceed from the will of Man, which of it self hath such liberty and freedom, that no necessity or violence can be impressed upon it from without. For if the consent of the *will* did necessarily follow any outward impression, then the power in our Soul, which we may perceive it hath to consult, deliberate and chuse, would be given in vain. Also the equity of all Laws, of all rewards and punishments would be taken away, seeing there can be neither *fault* nor *merit* in that which is altogether necessary and inevitable.

Again, there are divers evil *acts* or effects of the will, which if they proceeded of any necessity from the *Heavens*, then the same *Heavens* and Celestial Bodies must needs receive such efficacy from *God*, and so it would follow, that *God* who is most perfectly good, is the true cause of that which is *Morally evil*; and that when in his *Law* he professeth himself to abhor wickedness, which

which a force inserted by him into things themselves will inevitably produce, he doth will two things contrary one to the other; that the same thing should be done and not be done; and also that a Man offends in an action, which he doth by divine instigation.

They speak more probably, that say the *influences* of the *Stars* do first affect the Air, then our Bodies, with such qualities as oftentimes do excite and stir up in the mind some desires or affections answerable thereunto: and the *will* being allured or enticed by these *motions* doth oftentimes yield unto them. But if this should be granted, it makes nothing for the *question* we have in hand. For seeing that *Christian Religion* most of all withdraws Men from those things which are pleasing unto the body, it cannot therefore have its beginning from the *affections* of the body, and consequently not from the *influence* of the *Stars*; which (as but now we said) have no power over the mind, otherwise than by the *mediation* of those *affections*. The most prudent among *Astrologers* exempt truly wise and good Men from the dominion of the *Stars*: And *such* verily were they that first professed *Christianity*, as their lives do shew. Or if there be any efficacy in learning and knowledge against the infection of the body, even among *Christians* there were ever some that were *excellent* in this particular.

Besides, as the most learned do confess, the effects of the *Stars* respect certain *Climates* of the World, and are only for a season; but this *Religion* hath now continued above the space of one thousand six hundred years, and that not in one part only, but in the most remote places of

the World, and such as are under a far different position of the Stars.

SECT. XII.

The chief Points of Christianity are approved of by the Heathen: and if there be any thing that is hard to be believed therein, the like or worse is found among the Pagans.

BUT the Pagans have the less to object against *Christian Religion*: because all the parts thereof are of such *honesty* and *integrity*, that they convince Mens minds by their own light. In so much that there have not been wanting Men among the Pagans also, who have here and there said every one of those things, which our Religion hath in a body all together. As to give some instances; true *Religion* consists not in Rites and Ceremonies, but in the mind and *Spirit*: he is an *Adulterer* that hath but a *desire* to commit adultery: we ought not to *revenge* injuries: one Man should be the *Husband* of one Wife only: the league or bond of *Matrimony* ought to be constant and perpetual: Man is bound to *do good* unto all, specially to them that are in want: we must retrain from *Swear- ing* as much as may be: And as for our Food and Apparel we ought to content our selves with so much as will suffice nature, and the like. Or if happily there be some points in *Christianity* hard to be believed, yet the like also is found amongst the wisest of the *Heathen* themselves;

as before we have shewn concerning the *immortality* of *Souls*, and of the *Resurrection* of *Bodies*. Thus *Plato*, as he learned from the *Chaldeans*, distinguished the Divine nature into the *Father*, and the mind of the *Father*; (which he calls also the *branch* of *God*, the *Maker* of the *World*) and the *Soul* or *Spirit*, which keeps together and preserveth all things.

Julian, as great an enemy as he was of *Christians*, thought that the Divine Nature might be joined to the humane: and gave instance in *Æsculapius*, whom he imagined to have descended from *Heaven*, to the end he might teach Men the *Art* of *Physick*. The *Cross* of *Christ* offendeth many: But what do not the *Pagan* Writers tell of their *Gods*? that some of them waited upon *Kings* and *Princes*, others were *Thunder-struck*, others cut in sunder. And the wisest of them say, that the more it cost us to be honest, the more joy and delight it affords us.

To conclude, *Plato* in the second Book of his *Commonwealth*, as if he had been a *Prophet*, saith, for a Man to appear truly *just* and upright, it is requisite that his *virtue* be bereaved of all outward *ornaments*; so that he be by others accounted a *wicked* wretch, and scoffed at, and last of all hanged. And indeed that *Christ* might be the *Pattern* of greatest *Patience*, could no otherwise be obtained.

The FIFTH Book
OF THE
T R U T H
OF THE
Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

*A refutation of the Jews, beginning with a
Speech unto them, or Prayer for them.*

JUST like that glimmering between light and darkness, which appears to those, who by little and little are endeavouring to get out of a dark Cave or Dungeon : such doth *Judaism* present it self to us (who are stepping out of the thick mist of *Paganism*, of which we have been discoursing) as a part and beginning of truth. I request the *Jews* therefore not to be averse to hear us.

We are not ignorant that they are the offspring of holy Men, whom God was wont to visit both by his *Prophets*, and by his *Angels*. Of this Nation

Nation sprang our *Messias*, and the first *Doctors of Christianity*: It is their *Tree* whereinto we are ingrafted: they are the *keepers* of *God's Oracles*, which we do reverence as much as they, and with *St. Paul* sigh unto *God* for them, and pray that the day may quickly come, when the *Veil* being taken away which hangs over their *Faces*, they with us shall see the fulfilling of the *Law*; And when (as it is in their *Prophecies*) every one of us that are strangers shall lay hold on the *Cloak* of him that is an *Hebrew*, desiring that we may together with a pious consent *worship* the only *true God*, who is the *God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*.

SECT. II.

The Jews ought to account the Miracles of Christ sufficiently proved.

FIRST of all then, we must intreat them not to think that to be unjust in another Man's case, which they judge to be just and *equitable* in their own. If any *Pagan* demand of them why they believe that *Miracles* were wrought by *Moses*, they can give no other Answer save that there was always so constant a report thereof among their Nation, that it could not but proceed from the *testimony* of such as had *seen* the same.

Thus that the Widows Oyl was increased by *Elisba*: that *Naaman* the Syrian was suddenly cured of the Leprosie: that the Womans Son in whose House he Lodged was restored to life, and

and other such like, are believed by the *Jews* for no other reason, than because *witnesses* of good credit have recorded to *posterity*, that such things were done. And they believe *Elias* his taking up into *Heaven*, only for the single Testimony of *Elisha*, as a Man beyond all exception. But we produce *twelve witnesses*, of unblameable life, to testify that *Christ* ascended up into *Heaven*. And many more that saw him upon the Earth after his death. Which things if they be *true*, then necessarily *Christ's Doctrine* is *true* also; and indeed nothing at all can be alledged by the *Jews* for themselves, which by equal right, or more just title may not be applied to us also. But to omit farther Testimonies, it is the confession of the Authors of the *Talmud*, and other *Jews* themselves, that strange *Wonders* were wrought by *Christ*; which ought to suffice for this particular. For *God* cannot any way more effectually gain authority unto a *Doctrine* published by Man than by the working of *Miracles*.

S E C T. III.

And not believe that they were done by the help of Devils.

THESE *Miracles* of *Christ*, some said were done by the help of *Devils*. But this calumny hath been confuted before, when we shewed, that wheresoever the *Doctrine* of *Christ* was taught and known, there all power of the *Devils* was broken in pieces. Others reply that *Jesus* learned *Magick Arts* in *Egypt*: but this slander

flander hath no more, nay not so much *colour of truth*, than the like accusation by the *Pagans* framed against *Moses*, whereof we read in *Pliny* and *Apuleius*.

For, that ever *Jesus* was in *Egypt* doth not appear, save only out of the Writings of his Disciples: who add farther, that he was an *Infant* when he returned thence. But it is certain by his own and others report, that *Moses* lived a great part of his time after he was grown to Man's estate in *Egypt*. Howbeit the Law, as well of *Moses*, as of *Christ*, frees them both from this crime, plainly forbidding such *Arts*, as abominable in the sight of God. And without all question, if in the time of *Christ* and his Disciples, there had been either in *Egypt* or any where else any such *Magical Art*, whereby Men might have been enabled to do the like *Marvels* as are related of *Christ*; to wit, giving speech to the Dumb on a sudden, making the Lame to walk, and the Blind to see; then would *Tiberius*, *Nero*, and other *Emperors* have found it out, who spared no costs and charges in the *inquiry* after such like things.

Nay, if it were *true* which the *Jews* relate, how that the *Senators* of the great *Council* were skill'd in *Magick Arts*, that they might convince them that were guilty of that *iniquity*; then surely they being so mightily incensed against *Jesus*, as they were, and envying the honour and respect which he obtained chiefly by his *miracles*, would either themselves have done the like *works* by the same art, or by sufficient *reasons* would have made it appear, that the *works* of *Christ* proceeded from no other cause.

S E C T. IV.

Or by the Power of Words and Syllables.

MOreover, that is not only a meer fable, but impudent lye, which some of the *Jews* have invented concerning the *Miracles* done by *Christ*, which they ascribe to a certain *secret name*, which (as they say) being placed in the *Temple* by *Solomon*, was preserved late by two *Lions*, during the space of One Thousand Years and more, but afterward *stoln* away by *Jesus*. For there is no mention made of those *Lions* (though it be a thing most remarkable and wonderful,) either in the Books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, or by *Josephus*: nor was there any such thing found by the *Romans*, who accompanying *Pompey*, entred into that *Temple*, before the times of *Jesus*.

S E C T. V.

The Miracles of Jesus were divine, because he taught the worship of one God the Maker of the World.

IT being then granted, as the *Jews* cannot deny, that *wonders* were wrought by *Christ*, it will follow from the very Law of *Moses*, that he must be *believed*. For God saith, *Deut. xviii. 15, &c.* that other *Prophets* after the time of *Moses* should

should be raised up of God, to whom the People should be obedient, or otherwise become liable to grievous Punishments. Now *Miracles* are the most infallible *Marks* of the *Prophets*: Nor can any more illustrious be so much as conceived. But in *Deuter. xiiij.* it is said, that if *any*, professing himself to be a *Prophet*, doth work *Wonders*, yet he must not be *believed*, if he go about to *entice* the People to a new Worship of the *Gods*. For though such *Miracles* be done, yet this is only by *God's Permission*, for tryal, whether the People would persist constantly in the *Worship* of the true God. From which places compared together, the *Hebrew Interpreters* do rightly collect, that every one must be believed that worketh *Miracles*, unless thereby he entice Men from the *Worship* of the true God; and in that case only *Miracles* are not to be credited, though in shew most *glorious*. Now *Jesus* did not only not teach the *Worshipping* of *false Gods*; but also expressly condemned it as a most grievous Crime, and taught us to *reverence* the *Writings* both of *Moses* and the *Prophets* that succeeded him. Wherefore there is nothing that can be objected against the *Miracles* that were wrought by *Christ*.

S E C T. VI.

Answer to the Objection, taken from the difference between the Law of Moses and of Christ; where is shewn, that a more perfect Law than that of Moses might be given.

AS touching that which some alledge, concerning the difference between the *Law of Moses* and the *Law of Christ*, it is but of small moment. For the *Hebrew Doctors* themselves make this Rule, That by the authority of a Prophet, who worketh Miracles, any Precept whatsoever may be boldly violated and transgressed, except that only which concerns the Worship of the true God. And surely that power of making Laws, which belonged unto God when he gave the Commandments by the hand of *Moses*, went not from him afterward: Neither can any Man that of his own right makes *Laws*, be thereby hindered from making the contrary.

That which they object, that God then would be mutable, is nothing; for we speak not here of God's *Nature* and *Essence*, but of his *Works*. Light is changed into Darknes, Youth into Old Age, Summer into Winter, and all by the *Work* of God. Thus God at the beginning, gave *Adam* leave in *Paradise* to eat of other Apples, but he forbad him to eat of the Fruit of one Tree: Why? Even because it so pleased him. Generally he prohibited Men to kill others, yet he commanded *Abraham* to kill his Son. One while he forbad to offer *Sacrifices* apart from the *Tabernacle*, another while he admitted of them.

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Neither

Neither will it follow, because the *Law* which was given by *Moses* was good, therefore no *better* could be given. Parents are wont to speak half words and ~~stutter with Infants~~; to wink at the vices of their *childhood*; and entice them to learn with a piece of *Cake*. But so soon as they come to riper age, their *speech* is corrected, the precepts of *virtue* are instill'd into them by degrees, and they are taught what is the beauty of *virtue*, what its rewards. Now it is plain that the Precepts of that *law* of *Moses* were not exactly *perfect*, because many *holy Men* of those times led a more excellent *life* than those *commandments* required. Thus *Moses*, who suffered the *revenge* of a wrong to be exacted partly by blows, and partly by sentence of the Judges, himself being vexed with most bitter injuries, became an *Intercessor* for his *Enemies*. So *David*, willing to have his rebellious *Son* to be spared, did patiently endure reproachful speeches cast upon himself. We no where read that any *good Men* put away their *Wives*, which notwithstanding was permitted by the *Law*. The reason of which is, that *Laws* are accommodated to the greater part of a *People*; therefore in the state and condition they were in, it was meet something should be winked at: to be reduced to a more perfect Rule, when God by a greater efficacy of the *Spirit* was to chuse unto himself a new *peculiar People* out of all Nations. Yea, all the rewards which are expressly promised by the *Law* of *Moses* belong only to this *mortal life*: wherefore it must be granted, that there might some better *Law* be given, whereby the *reward* of *eternal happiness* should be promised, not under any shadows, but in plain and

express

express terms: which we see is done by the Law of *Christ*.

S E C T. VII.

The Law of Moses was observed by Jesus, who abolished no Commandments that were essentially good.

AND here by the way, for the conviction of the *Jews* iniquity, it must be noted, that they who lived in *Christ's* time, used him most basely, and punished him most unjustly; when as there could no just accusation be laid against him for transgressing the Law. He was circumcised: he used the same food and apparel that the *Jews* used: those that were healed of Leprosie, he sent unto the Priest: The Passover and other Festival days he religiously observed: Though he did cure some upon the Sabbath day; yet he shewed both by the Law and by the common received opinions, that such Works were not forbidden to be done upon the Sabbath day. Then it was that he first began to publish the abrogation of some Laws, when after his triumph over Death he ascended into Heaven, adorning his Disciples upon Earth with illustrious Gifts of the Holy Spirit, whereby he made it evident that he had obtained a regal Power, which includes in it the authority of making a Law: And that according to Daniel's Prophecy, ch. 3. & 7. compared with ch 1. & 11. where he foretold, how that a little after the destruction of the Kingdoms of Syria and Ægypt, (the latter

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whereof

whereof happened in the Reign of *Augustus*,) *GOD* would give the Kingdom to a *Man* (who should seem but a vulgar Person) over all Nations and Languages, which Kingdom should never have an end.

Now that part of the *Law*, the necessity whereof was taken away by *Christ*, contained nothing that was *honest* in its own nature : but consisted of things that were indifferent in themselves, and consequently not *immutable*. For if those things had had in them any thing of themselves, why they should be done ; then would *God* have prescribed them not to *one*, but to *all* People ; and not after that *Mankind* had lived above the space of Two Thousand Years, but even from the beginning of all. Neither *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Melchisedech*, *Job*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, or *Jacob*, (though all of them were *godly men*, and dearly beloved of *God*,) knew *this part* of the *Law*, but were altogether ignorant, or very little acquainted therewith ; yet notwithstanding, for all that, they received the *Testimony* of their confidence in *God*, and of *God's* love unto them. Besides, neither did *Moses* exhort *Jethro* his Father-in-law to the receiving of these *Rites*, nor did *Jonah* the *Ninevites*, neither did any other *Prophets* reprehend the *Chaldeans*, *Egyptians*, *Sydonians*, *Tyrians*, *Idumeans*, and *Moabites*, for not admitting those *Ceremonies*, though when they writ unto them, they reckoned up their *sins* exactly enough. These then were *peculiar precepts*, introduced either for the avoiding of some evil, which the *Jews* were *prone* unto ; or for the *tryal* of their *Obedience*, or for the *signification* of some *future* things.

Where-

Wherefore it is no more to be wondered, that *these* are *abolished*, than if any King should abrogate some *Municipal Statutes*, (which belong, that is, to particular Corporations) to the end he might establish *one Law* within his Dominions. Neither can there any Reason be alledged, to prove that *God* did so bind himself, as that he would *change* nothing of the same.

For if it be said, that these Precepts are called *perpetual*, the same *Word* Men oftentimes use, when they would signifie that *that* which they command is not *yearly*, or accommodated to certain times, suppose of War, Peace, or Scarcity. Yet they are not thereby hindered from making new *constitutions* of the same things, specially when the *publick good* requires it. Thus in like manner some of the Divine Precepts given to the *Hebrews* were *temporary*, during the Peoples abode in the *wildernefs*: others were strictly tied to their Habitation in the Land of *Canaan*: therefore to distinguish these from the other, he calls them *perpetual*, whereby might be understood, that they ought not any where, or at any time to be *intermitted*, unless *God* signified that it was his *Will* so to be. Which manner of speaking, since it is commonly used by all *People*, ought to be less wondered at by the *Hebrews*: who know that in their Law it is called a *Perpetual Statute*, and a *Perpetual Bondage*, which continues only from one *Jubilee*, to another: And the coming of the *Messias* is called by them the accomplishment of the *Jubilee*, or the greatest *Jubilee* of all. Thus in the *Hebrew Prophets*, there was anciently a promise of making a new *Covenant*, as in *Jerem. xxxi.* where *God* promiseth that *he will make a new Covenant, which shall be*

put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts; neither shall men have any need, that one shall learn Religion of another, for it shall be manifest unto all. Yea farther, the Lord will forgive them their former iniquities, and will remember their sin no more: which is as if a King after great enmity and discord amongst his Citizens and Subjects, should for the establishment of peace and tranquillity among them, take away all diversity of Laws, and make one perfect Law common to them all, promising forgiveness of faults by-past, if hereafter they do amend. And this which hath been said might suffice, but we will survey every part of the Law which is abrogated, and shew they were neither such as in themselves could be well pleasing unto God, nor ought they to continue for ever.

SECT. VIII.

As the Sacrifices, which of themselves were never well pleasing unto God.

THE first and chief thing to be considered, are the *Sacrifices*, which many of the *Hebrews* think were invented by *Man*, before that they were commanded by *God*. And true it is indeed, the *Hebrews* were desirous of abundance of Rites and Ceremonies, so that there was cause enough why *GOD* should enjoin them very many; if it were but for this reason, lest they should return unto the worship of false Gods, by the remembrance of their sojourning in *Ægypt*.

Howbeit

Howbeit when their *Posterity* made too great account of them, as though of themselves they had been acceptable unto God, and a part of *true piety*; then did the *Prophets* reprehend them for it: About Sacrifices, saith God by David, in the fiftieth Psalm, *I will not so much as exchange a word with thee; as if I were desirous to have thy burnt offerings continually before me. I will take no Bullock out of thy house, nor He-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the Forest is mine, and so are the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the World is mine, and the fulness thereof: thinkest thou that I will eat the flesh of Bulls, or drink the blood of Goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high.*

Some there are among the *Hebrews*, who say that this is spoken, because they that offered those *sacrifices*, were of an *impure* mind and dishonest conversation. But the words now alledged shew another matter, to wit, that the thing in it self was no whit acceptable unto God. For if we consider the whole *series* and *order* of the Psalm, we shall find that God in these words speaks unto the godly: for he had said, *Gather my Saints together unto me, and hear, my people*: which are the words of a Teacher and one that instructeth. Then having ended those words now alledged, as his manner is, he speaks unto the wicked: *But unto the wicked God saith. To the same sense we may cite other places, as in the 51 Psalm. Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it thee, but thou delightest not in burnt offerings. The sacrifice of God is a broken Spirit: a*

broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. So likewise in the fortieth Psalm; Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, but hast tied me to thee, as he whose ear was bored through, to be thy servant: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: In the volume of the Book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy Law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great Congregation: Lo, I have not refrained my Lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great Congregation. The like we read in the Prophet Isaiah, chap. 1. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt-offerings of Rams, and the fat of fed Beasts, and I delight not in the blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or of He-Goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands to tread my Courts? Answerable to this place, and the Interpreter of it, is that in Jer. 7. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat their flesh your selves: For I spake not unto your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God and ye shall be my People: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. Agreeing with this is that in Hosea 6. To shew mercy to men is more acceptable to me than sacrifice, to think rightly of God more than all burnt-offerings. Lastly,

in the sixth of *Micah*, when the question was made, What was the best way to obtain the favour of God? Whether by coming before him with a great number of Rams, or with a great quantity of Oil, or with Calves of a Year old? to this God answers and saith, *I will tell thee what is truly good and acceptable unto me; namely, To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*

By all which places it being apparent, that Sacrifices are not in the number of those things which God desires for themselves, or primarily; and that the People (a naughty Superstition creeping in, as is usual, by little and little among them) placed a great part of their Piety in them, and believed they made a sufficient compensation for their sins by Sacrifices: what wonder is it, if God at length take away a thing, which was not now in its own nature indifferent, but whose use was now become a Vice? Since King *Hezekiah* did not stick to break even the brazen Serpent, erected by *Moses*; because the People began to honour it with Religious Worship.

Moreover, there are divers *Prophecies*, that foretold these *Sacrifices*, whereof we speak, should come to an end: which any one may easily conceive, who doth but consider that according to the Law of *Moses*, only the Posterity of *Aaron* was to do sacrifice, and that only in their own Country. But in the 110th *Psalms*, there is a King promised whose *Dominion* should be most ample, the beginning whereof should be out of *Sion*: and this same King was to be a Priest also for ever, and that after the order of *Melchisedech*. So *Isaiah* saith, chap. 19. *That there shall be an Altar to the Lord in the midst of the Land of Egypt,*
where

where not only the *Egyptians*, but the *Assyrians* also, and the *Israelites* shall worship God. And in the 66. chapter, he saith, that the People of all Nations and Languages, which are far and widely distant, shall come as well as the *Israelites*, and offer gifts unto God, and of them also there shall be ordained *Priests* and *Levites*: All which could not come to pass so long as the *Law of Moses* remained in force. Add unto these, that in the first of *Malachi*, God foretelling future things, saith, he abhorred the Offerings of the *Hebrews*, *I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the Sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Lastly, *Daniel* in his 9. chapter rehearsing the Prophecy of the Angel *Gabriel* concerning Christ, saith, *That he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.* And not by words only, but really and indeed God plainly enough shews that he likes not any longer those *Sacrifices* which were prescribed by *Moses*, seeing that he hath suffered the *Jews*, for the space of one thousand six hundred years and more, to be without *Temple*, without *Altar*, and without any certain distinction of their Tribes or lineage; whence it might appear who they are that may lawfully offer sacrifice.

SECT. IX.

The difference of Meats.

NOW what we have declared concerning the *Law of Sacrifices*, the same may be proved of that *Law* which forbids the *use of some kinds of meats*. For it is plain that after the great Deluge, God gave licence unto Noah and his Posterity, to use any sort of *victual*: Which Right therefore passed not only to *Japhet* and *Cham*, but also unto *Sem* and his Posterity, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*. But afterward when the People being in *Ægypt* were addicted to the naughty *superstitions* of that Country; then began God to forbid them the eating of some kind of *living Creatures*; either because the *Egyptians* offered those creatures unto their Gods, and made divination by them; or because in that ceremonial *Law* Mens fundry vices were shadowed out by divers kind of *living creatures*.

Again, that these *precepts* were not *universal*, it is manifest by that *statute* which was made touching the *flesh* of a Beast that died of it self, *Deut. 14.* which to eat was not *lawful* for the *Israelites*, but it was *lawful* for the *strangers* that dwelt among them, unto whom the *Jews* by *divine* command were to perform all Offices of *courtesie*, as persons esteemed by God. Likewise the ancient *Hebrew* Doctors do plainly teach, that in the time of the *Messias*, the *Law* concerning forbidden meats should cease: when the *Sow* should be as clean and as pure as the *Oxe*. And verily, in as much as God out of all Nations would collect

collect unto himself *one Church*, it was more just and equitable to have a *common liberty* than a *bondage* in such things.

SECT. X.

And of Days.

IT follows, that we consider of *Festival Days*: all which were instituted and ordained in remembrance of that benefit received of *God*, when they were freed from *Egyptian calamity*, and afterward brought into the *promised Land*. Now the Prophet *Jeremy*, in the 16th and 23d Chapters, saith, *that the time would come when more new and greater benefits should so obscure the remembrance of that benefit, as that afterward there should scarce be any mention thereof*. Besides, that which but now was said concerning *Sacrifices*, is true also of *Festival Days*; the People began to put confidence in them, thinking that if they kept and observed them well, it was no matter though they transgressed in other matters: whereupon, in the first Chapter of *Isaiah*, *God* saith, That his Soul hated their *new Moons*, and appointed Feasts, and that they were such a trouble unto him, as that he was weary to bear them. More particularly it is objected concerning the *Sabbath*, that the Law thereof is *universal* and *perpetual*, because it was not given to one peculiar people only, but to *Adam* the Parent of all Mankind at the very beginning of the World. I answer, with the most learned of the *Hebrews*, that there is a twofold Precept concerning the *Sabbath*; the first is a Precept

cept for commemoration, *Exod.* 20. 8. and the second is a Precept for observation, *Exod.* 31. 13. The former is fulfilled by a religious remembrance of the World's creation: and the latter consists in an exact refraining from all kinds of other labour. The former was given from the beginning, which doubtless those godly men before the Law did obey, to wit, *Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* The last of which, though they travelled much, as we read, yet there is no where the least sign or remembrance of their intermitting their Journey for the Sabbath; which after they came out of *Egypt* you shall always meet with. For after that the People were brought out of *Egypt*, and had happily passed over the *Red Sea*, the next day they celebrated a Sabbath of rest and safety; wherein they sang a Song of triumph and rejoicing: from which time that exact rest upon the Sabbath was commanded, which is first mentioned upon occasion of gathering the *Manna*, *Exod.* 16. 23. and 35. 2. *Lev.* 23. 3. And in this sense the deliverance from *Egypt* is made the reason for the Law of the Sabbath, *Deut.* 5. 15. By which Law provision also was made for Servants, against the severity of those Masters that would not grant them any Rest or Relaxation from daily labour, as may be seen in the places aforesaid. It is true indeed, Strangers were bound to observe this Law, because it was meet there should be one form of Rest among all the People; but this Law of so exact resting upon the Sabbath was not given to other People, as may appear by this, that in many places it is called a Sign, and a special Covenant also between God and the *Israelites*, as in *Exod.* 31. 13, and 16. Now we have proved
before

before, by the *promise* of far greater *benefits*, that the *ordinances* which were instituted for a *memorial* of the coming out from *Egypt*, were not *such* as ought *never* to cease. Add moreover, if the *Law* concerning the *rest* upon the *Sabbath* had been given from the beginning, and in that sense, that it never might be abolished; then surely that *Law* had prevailed over other *Laws*, when there was a clashing between them: which we find was quite contrary, by its yielding to them. For it is evident, that *Infants* were rightly *circumcised* upon the *Sabbath*; like, as during the time that the *Temple* stood, there were *Beasts* killed for *Sacrifice*, as well upon the *Sabbath*, as upon other days. Yea, the *Hebrew* Masters themselves shew the mutability of this *Law*, when they say, that by a *Prophet's* appointment and *command* a work may be rightly done upon the *Sabbath-day*: and this they prove by the taking of *Jericho* upon the *Sabbath*, according to the commandment of *Joshuah*. And some of them not unfitly shew, that the distinction of days shall be taken away in the time of the *Messias*, from that place in *Isaiah* lxvi. 23. where it is prophesied, *It shall come to pass that the worship of God shall be perpetual from one new Moon to another: from one Sabbath to another.*

SECT:

SECT. XL

Also of outward Circumcision.

IN the next place, let us come to *Circumcision*, which certainly is Elder than *Moses*: For it was given in command to *Abraham* and his *Posterity*.

Howbeit the Commandment thereof was the introduction or beginning of the *Covenant* published by *Moses*: For thus we read, that God spake unto *Abraham*. *Gen. 17.* saying, *I will give unto thee and to thy Seed after thee, the Land wherein thou art a stranger, all the Land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee: every man-child among you shall be circumcised.* But now we know by what hath been already said, that in the place of this *Covenant*, a new *Covenant* was to succeed, which should be common to all People: For which cause the necessity of that note of *distinction* ought to cease. Besides, in the *Precept* of *Circumcision* there was a *mystical* and more excellent *signification* contained, which the *Prophets* do plainly shew in that they command the *Circumcision* of the *Heart*, which all the Commandments of *Jesus* aim at.

Wherefore the *Promises* also annexed to *Circumcision*, are in like manner to be referred to some greater thing: As that of *earthly possessions*, to the Revelation of a Possession truly eternal: which was never made more manifest than by *Jesus*: so that promise of making *Abraham* a *Father*.

ther of many Nations, hath reference to that time, when not a few, but an infinite number of People despersed throughout the whole World, should imitate *Abraham's* Faith and confidence in God, which is so often mentioned in Scripture; and this never came to pass, but in the time of the Gospel. Now it is no marvel, if the shadows of an intended Work be taken away: when the matter it self is accomplisht. Lastly, that the grace of God was not tied to this sign, we may easily discern, because not only the more ancient, but *Abraham* himself having not as yet received Circumcision, pleased God: The *Hebrews* also, during all the time of their journey through the Desarts of *Arabia*, omitted Circumcision, and yet God found no fault with them for it.

S E C T. XII.

And yet the Apostles of Jesus were gentle in the toleration of these things.

NO doubt but the *Hebrews* had cause to yield many thanks to *Jesus* and his Ambassadors, for that by *Christ* they might be freed from that heavy yoke of Ceremonies, and be assured of this their freedom both by Gifts and Miracles, such as were not inferiour to those that were wrought by *Moses*.

And yet the first Publishers of our Christian Doctrine did not exact so much of them as to acknowledge this their happiness: But if they would admit of the Commandments of *Christ*, which were full of all Honesty; they easily suffered them

to

to follow what course of life they pleased in matters of *indifferency* : Yet so, that upon *Strangers*, (to whom this *Law* of *Rites* was never given) they should not impose a necessity of observing them. Which one thing is sufficient to make it plainly appear, that the *Jews* do unjustly reject the *Dollrine* of *Christ*, under that pretence of the *cereemonial Law*. Having then answered this Objection, which chiefly is alledged against the *Miracles* of *Jesus*, we will now come to other *Arguments*, which may fitly serve for the Conviction of the *Jews*.

SECT. XIII.

A Proof against the Jews, from the promised Messias.

IT is agreed upon between *us* and the *Jews*, that in the *predictions* of the *Prophets*, above many other *Authors* and *Donors* of great good things to the *Hebrews*, there was one Man promised far more *excellent* than the rest; whom they call by a name common to others, but in the highest sense of it belonging to him alone, the *MESSIAS*. This *Messias*, we say, is come long ago; but they expect him as yet for to come. It remains then that we seek for a decision of this Controversie out of those Books, the *Authority* whereof we both do jointly acknowledge.

S E C T. XIV.

Who is proved to be already come, by the limited time of his coming, which was foretold.

THE Prophet *Daniel*, to whom *Ezekiel* hath given a Testimony of exceeding great Piety, neither would willingly deceive us, nor was himself deceived by the Angel *Gabriel*. Now he, taught by the same *Angel*, in the Ninth Chapter of his *Prophecy*, hath left it recorded, that before *five hundred Years* should be expired, after the promulgation of the *Decree* touching the restoring of the City *Hierusalem*, the *Messias* should come. But now, since that time, above *two thousand Years* have passed, and yet he whom the *Jews* expect is not come: Neither can they name any other *Person*, to whom that space or *time* can be rightly applied; which agrees so fitly unto *Jesus*, that *Nebumias*, an *Hebrew Doctor* who lived about *fifty years* before *Christ*, plainly said then, that the time of the *Messias*, foretold by *Daniel*, could not be protracted beyond those *Fifty Years* then next ensuing. And with this note of time agrees another *note*, which we have touch'd before, concerning the establishing of a Dominion over all Nations by a Divine Authority, after that the *posterity* of *Seleucus* and *Ptolomy* had ceased to reign; the latter whereof ended in *Cleopatra*, a little before *Jesus* was born. The third *note* is set down in the foresaid 9th. Chapter of *Daniel*; namely, that after the coming of the *Messias*, the City of *Hierusalem* should be overthrown: Which *Prophecy* of the City's destruction,

destruction, *Josephus* himself referreth unto *his time*; whence it follows, that the *time* appointed for the coming of the *Messias*, was then already past. Hereunto likewise belongs that in the Second Chapter of the Prophet *Haggai*, where God, by the Prophet, comforteth *Zerubbabel, the Son of Shealtiel, Governor of Judah; and Josuah, the Son of Josedech, the High Priest*; who were sorrowful to see the Temple, which they built, fall so short of the first Temple, with this promise, *that the glory of the latter house should be greater than the former*: Which certainly can neither be meant of the *greatness* of the work, nor of the *matter* of the building, nor of the *fabrick* and *artificial structure*, nor of the *ornaments* of that Temple; as may appear by the *History* of those times, both in the *Holy Scriptures*, and in *Josephus*, compared with that of the Temple of *Solomon*. Add to this, that the *Hebrew Doctors* note, this latter Temple wanted two of the greatest endowments, which the former enjoyed, *viz.* a certain *conspicuous Light*, which was the token of the *Divine Majesty* there, and *Divine Inspiration*. But God himself briefly declares, in that very place, wherein the latter Temple should excel the former; when He promises He would settle, as by a sure Covenant, *His Peace, i. e.* his favor and loving-kindness, in that Temple. Which the Prophet *Malachi* declares more largely in his Third Chapter; *Behold, I will send my messenger, who shall prepare my ways. There shall shortly come into his Temple* (now *Malachi* lived when the latter Temple was built) *that Lord whom ye desire; even that messenger of the Covenant, who is our delight*. Wherefore the *Messias* ought to come while the Second

Temple stood; which, in the account of the *Hebrews*, comprehends all that time which was between *Zerubbabel* and *Vespasian*: For in the time of *Herod the Great*, the Temple was not *re-edified* out of its old Ruins, but by little and little it was *repaired*; bearing still the name of the same Temple. And indeed, there was so firm an Opinion amongst the *Hebrews*, and the neighbouring People, that the *Messias* was surely to come in those times, that many took *Herod*; others, *Judas Gaulonites*; and a third sort, others that lived about the times of *Jesus*, to be the *Messias*.

SECT. XV.

Answer to that which some conceive, touching the deferring of his coming, for the sins of the People.

SOME of the *Jews*, perceiving themselves to be hard put to it, by these *Arguments*, concerning the *coming* of the *Messias*, go about to shift them off, by telling us that *their sins* were the cause why he did not come at the promised time. But (to omit that those Prophecies express a Decree determined, not suspended upon any condition) how is it possible that this *coming* should be deferred by reason of their sins, when this also was foretold, that because of the many and hainous *Transgressions* of the People, the great City should be laid waste a little after the times of the *Messias*? Moreover, one reason of the *Messias* his coming was, to cure a
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most corrupted World, and, together with Rules for amendment of Life, to bring a Pardon for sins past. Whence it is that *Zachariah* saith, concerning his times, *Chap. xiii.* that *there should be then a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Hierusalem, for to wash away sin and uncleanness.* And it is affirmed by the *Hebrews* themselves, that the *Messiah* shall be called *Ischcopher*; that is, a Reconciler, or Expiator of sins. But it is against all reason, to say, that any thing was deferred, because of that *disease*, for which it was precisely destinated and appointed.

SECT. XVI.

Also from the present state of the Jews, compared with those things which the Law promisetb.

TOUCHING this which we affirm, of the coming of the *Messias* long since into the World, the *Jews* are convinced by *very sense.* God made a Covenant with *Moses*, and promised to them the happy possession of the Land of *Palestine*, so long as they should lead their life according to the *Commandments* of the *Law*: But contrarily, he threatned *Banishment*, and such like *Calamities*, to come upon them, if they did grievously transgress the same. Yet, if at any time when they were oppressed with *Miseries*, they, *repenting* of their sins, returned unto *obedience*; then would he be *moved* to have mercy upon the People, and cause, that though they were scattered to the

uttermoſt parts of the Earth, yet ſhould they return again into their own *Country*; as we may read in *Deut.* 30. and *Nehem.* 1. and elſewhere. But now, for the ſpace of *one thouſand five hundred years*, and more, the *Jews* have wanted a *Country*, and a *Temple*: And when they have attempted to build a new one, they have been always hindred; even by Balls of Fire breaking out in the Foundations, and overthrowing the work; as *Ammianus Marcellinus*, a Writer who was not a Chriſtian, reports. When this People, in times paſt, had defiled themſelves with abominable wickedneſſes, commonly ſacrificing even their *children* unto *Saturn*, accounting *Adultery* to be no ſin, oppreſſing and ſpoiling the Fatherleſs and Widows, and ſhedding the innocent Blood in great abundance, all which the Prophets upbraid them with; then did they *ſuffer exile*, yet not longer than for the ſpace of *ſeventy years*; during which time alſo, God did not neglect to *ſpeak* unto them by his Prophets, and to *comfort* them with the *hope* of a Return, pointing alſo at the very time thereof. But now, ever ſince they were expelled out of their *Country*, they continue *banished* and contemptible; no *Prophet* comes unto them; there is no ſign or token of their return; their Maſters and Ring-leaders (as if they were blaſted with the *ſpirit of giddineſs*) are fallen away to filthy fables and doctrines very ridiculous, wherewith the *Books* of the *Talmud* do abound; which they are bold to call *the Law given by word of mouth*, and are wont to *equal* or prefer to that which was written by *Mofes*. For ſuch things as are therein to be read concerning God's weeping and lamenting, becauſe he had ſuffered the *City* to be
destroyed;

destroyed; of his daily care and diligence in reading the *Law*; of *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*, and many other matters, are so absurd, that it would be irksome even to repeat them. Howbeit, the *Jews* in all this time have neither turned to the worship of *false Gods*, as they did in times past; neither have they defiled themselves with bloody Murders, nor are they accused of *Adulteries*: But by prayers and fastings they labour to appease *God's* wrath, and yet are not heard. Which things being so, one of these two must needs be granted; namely, that either the *covenant* that was given by *Moses* is quite abolished; or the whole body of the *Jewish Nation* lies under the guilt of some notorious *crime*, which hath continued for so many Ages together; which what it is, let themselves speak; or if they cannot tell, then let them *believe us*, that this sin is no other, but the *contempt* of the *Messias*, who was come before that these evils began to fall upon them.

S E C T. XVII.

Jesus is proved to be the Messias, by those things which were foretold concerning the Messias.

BY this which hath been spoken, it is manifest that the *Messias* came many Ages ago: We add farther, that he is no other but *Jesus*. For what other Persons soever either were, or would have been accounted the *Messias*, they have

left no *Self* behind them to uphold and maintain that opinion. There are not any at this day that profess themselves to be followers either of *Herod*, or of *Judas Gaulonita*, or of that great Impostor *Barchochebas*, who living in the times of *Adrian*, said that he was the *Messias*, and deceived some, even of the most learned. But those that profess the Name of *Jesus*, have continued from the time that he lived upon Earth, even until this day; and are still not a few, only in this or that Country, but very many, dispersed as far as the World extendeth. I could alledge many other *Testimonies* anciently foretold or believed concerning the *Messias*, which we believe were accomplished in *Jesus*, since they are not so much as affirmed of any other: As, namely, that he came of the *Posterity* of *David*, and was born of a *Virgin*; which was divinely revealed to him that married that *Virgin*; when he would have put her away, supposing she had been got with child by another. Also, that this *Messias* was born at *Bethlehem*, and began first to publish his doctrine in *Galilee*, healing all kinds of *Diseases*, giving sight to the *Blind*, and making the *Lame* to walk. But this one may suffice for many, the effect of which continues unto this day: It is most manifest by the *Prophecies* of *David*, *Isaiah*, *Zachariah* and *Hosea*, that the *Messias* was to be an *Instructor*, not only of the *Jews*, but also of the *Gentiles*; that by him the worship of false Gods should fall to the ground, and an huge multitude of *Aliens* and *Strangers* should be brought to the *Worship* of the only true God. Before *Jesus* his coming, almost the whole World was overspread with false *Worships* and *Religions*; which afterward, by little and little began to vanish away, and not only single persons,

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but both People and Kings were converted unto the *worship* and service of one God. This was not owing to the *Jewish Rabbins*; but to the Disciples of *Jesus*, and their Successors. Thus *they* were made the People of God, that before were not the People of God: And the saying of old *Jacob*, Gen. 49. was fulfilled, That before all civil Authority should be taken from *Judah*, *Shilo* should come. Which the *Chaldee*, and other Interpreters, expound of the *Messias*; to whom even foreign Nations should be obedient.

S E C T. XVIII.

Answer to that which is objected, of some things that are not fulfilled.

TH E *Jews* usually object, that *some things* were foretold, concerning the times of the *Messias*, which are not yet fulfilled. But for answer, *Those matters* which they alledge, are obscure, and admit of divers *significations*: Wherefore we ought not, because of them, to forsake those things that are manifest; such as the *Holiness* of the *Commandments* of *Jesus*, the excellency of the *Reward*, and the perspicuous *Language* wherein it is propounded: To which, if we add the *Testimony* of his *Miracles*, these ought to be sufficient inducements to the receiving of his *Doctrine*. As for those *Prophecies* which go under the name of a shut or clasped Book, oftentimes, for the right understanding thereof, there is requisite some *Divine helps* and *assurances*, which they are worthily deprived of, that neglect
mani-

manifest *Truths*. The places of *Scripture*, which they object, are diversly expounded, as themselves cannot deny. And if any Men please to compare either the ancient Interpreters, which lived when the People were led Captive into *Babylon*, or such as lived about Christ's time, with those that writ after that *Christianity* began to be hateful and odious unto the *Jews*, he shall find new *Expositions*, purposely invented, to cross those forms, that well agreed with the sense of *Christians*. They know well enough that there are many things in the holy Scriptures, which must be understood by a Figure, and not in Propriety of Speech; as, when *God* is said to have descended; and to have a Mouth, Ears, Eyes and Nostrils. And why may not we likewise expound divers things, that are spoken of the *times* of the *Messias*, after the same manner; as that the *Wolf* shall dwell with the *Lamb*, and the *Leopard* shall lie down with the *Kid*; and the *Calf*, and the young *Lyon*, and the *Fatling* together; and the *sucking Child* shall play with the *Serpents*; and the *Mountain* of the Lord shall be exalted above other Mountains, whither *Strangers* shall come and worship.

There are some things *promised*, which by antecedent or consequent words, or by the very sense, imply a *tacit Condition* in them. Thus *God* promised many things unto the *Hebrews*, upon condition they would receive the *Messias* that was sent, and obey him: Which same things, if they come not to pass accordingly, then may they blame themselves, that are the cause thereof.

Again, other matters were *promised determinedly*, and without all condition; which if they be not already accomplished, yet may be hoped for here.

hereafter. For it is evident, even among the *Jews*, that the time or *Kingdom* of the *Messias* must endure unto the end of the World.

S E C T. XIX.

And to that which is objected of the mean condition and death of Jesus.

Many do take exception at the low and *mean* condition of *Jesus*, but unjustly, because in *sacred Writ* it is often said, that *God will exalt the humble, but cast down the proud.* *Jacob*, when he passed over *Jordan*, carried nothing with him, save his *staff* only; and yet returned enriched with a great flock of sheep.

Moses was a poor *Exile*, and feeding the flocks, when *God* appeared to him in the *bush*, and gave him commission for the conduct of his People. *David* also was called to his Kingdom, when he was feeding *Sheep*. And with many other such like *Examples* doth the *Sacred Story* abound. Now concerning the *Messias*, we read, that he should be a glad some *Messenger* unto the poor, that he should make no noise in publick, nor use any strife and contention; but deal *gently*, forbearing to break the shaken reed, and cherishing that heat which remains in smoking flax.

Neither ought the rest of his *afflictions*, nor his *ignominious death*, to make him despicable to any. For *God* oftentimes suffereth the *godly*, not only to be vexed and disquieted by the *wicked*, as righteous *Lot* was by the Citizens of *Sodom*; but also even to be destroyed, and slain; as is plain

plain by the Example of *Abel*, who was cruelly murdered by his Brother; of *Isaiah*, who was sawn in pieces; and of the *seven Brethren* in the *Maccabees*, who, together with their Mother, were miserably tormented, and put to death. The very *Jews* themselves sing the *Seventy ninth Psalm*; wherein are these words, *The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven: the flesh of those whom thou lovest, O God, unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed, like water, round about Jerusalem: and there was none to bury them.* And whosoever considers the words of *Isaiah* in the 53d. Chapter, cannot deny that the *Messias* himself ought to have passed thorow much *Affliction*, and *Death*, to come into his Kingdom, and obtain Power to adorn his Household, or Church, with the most excellent Blessings.

The words in the Prophet are these: *Who hath believed our report; and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of the dry ground: He hath no form or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs: And we hide as it were our faces from him; he was so despised, and in so small esteem among us. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way: And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* He
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was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. After imprisonment and sentence passed on him, he was taken away, but who shall worthily declare his duration when he was restored to life again? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; but for the transgression of my people he was stricken; and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death: though he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. But though it hath pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he hath put him to grief; Yet because he made himself an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; by taking away their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured his soul unto death. And he was numbred with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Who is there, either among the Kings, or Prophets, to whom these things can be applied? Surely, none. As touching that *shift* which some latter *Jews* have invented, telling us, that the Prophet speaks here of the *Hebrews* dispersed thorow all *Nations*; that by their Example and Persuasion, they might every where make many Profelytes: This sence is first of all repugnant to many testimonies of holy Writ, which loudly proclaim, that no evil is befalln the *Jews*, which they have not deserved (and a great deal more beside) for their evil Deeds. He also, of whom

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Esaiah treats, was to deprecate God for the Hea-then; which the *Jews* do not. And lastly, the very order and series of the propheticall discourse will not bear that interpretation; for either the Prophet (which seems *more proper* to that place) or God saith, *This evil hapned unto him for the iniquities of my people.* Now the people of *Isaiah*, or the peculiar people of God, are the people of the *Hebrews*; therefore he who is said by *Isaiah* to have suffered such grievous things, cannot be that same People.

But the ancient *Dollors* of the *Hebrews* more ingenuously *confess*, that these things were spoken of the *Messias*: Whereupon some latter among them have devised two *Messiases*; the one they call the Son of *Joseph*, who was to suffer many miseries, and a Bloody death; the other is the Son of *David*, to whom all things should succeed prosperously. When it would be far more easie, and more consonant with the *Writings* of the *Prophets*, to acknowledge but one *Messias*, who was to pass unto his Kingdom through many *difficulties*, and death it self; which we *believe* of *Jesus*, and the thing it self declares to be most true.

SECT. XX.

And, as though they were honest Men that put him to death.

Many of the *Jews* are kept back from receiving the Religion of *Jesus*, by a certain pre-conceived opinion of the *virtue* and honesty

honesty of their *Ancestors*, and especially of the *Priests*, who out of prejudice condemned *Jesus*, and rejected his *Dollrine*. But what kind of Men their *Ancestors* oft-time were, (that they may not think I defame them) let them hear the words of their own *Law* and *Prophets*, wherein they are often called *uncircumcised in heart and ears*; a people that honoured God with their lips, and with the garnish of Ceremonies, but their hearts were far from him. It was their *Ancestors* that went about, and were very near to have killed their Brother *Joseph*; and, in very deed, sold him into bondage. It was their *Ancestors* also, that, by their continual mutinies and seditions, made *Moses* weary of his life, who was their *Leader*, and *Redeemer*; whom the Earth, the Sea, and the Air obeyed. These were they that loathed the Bread that was sent from *Heaven*; complaining as though they had been in greatest want and scarcity, even when they belched up again the Fowl that they had eaten. It was their *Ancestors* that, forsaking *David*, so excellent and good a King, followed *Abfalon*, his rebellious Son. It was their *Ancestors* that slew *Zachariah*, the Son of *Jehojada*, in the most holy place; making their Priest himself a Sacrifice of their cruelty. Now as concerning the *Chief Priests*, they were such as conspired the death of *Jeremy* by a false accusation; and had killed him indeed, unless they had been hinder'd by the authority of some of the Nobles: Notwithstanding which they prevailed so far, as to have him imprisoned until the very moment that the City was taken. If any Man imagine those were any thing better that lived in the times of *Jesus*, *Josephus* will shew him his *Error*; who describes their villainous

Acts,

Acts, and grievous Punishments, such as the like were never heard of, and yet, as he thinks, below their Desert. Neither may we conceive more favourably of their *great Council* or *Senate*; specially because at that time the *Senators* were not chosen after the old Custom, by laying on of hands, but by the pleasure or sway of powerful Men: As the High Priests also were not elected for term of life, but obtained that Dignity only from year to year, and that oftentimes for *Money*. We need not then wonder, if Men that were puffed up with Pride, unsatiable in their *Ambition* and *Covetousness*, did break out into fury and madness when they beheld a *Man* that, by his holy *Precepts* and upright *Behaviour*, reprov'd their far different *Life*, and vicious *Conversation*. Neither was there any other thing laid to his charge, but what the best of Men had been accused of long before. Thus that *Micaiah*, that lived in the time of *Jehoshaphat*. was cast into Prison, because he boldly spake the *Truth*, against Four Hundred *lying Prophets*. *Abah* upbraided *Elijah*, just as the *Priests* did *Jesus*; saying, that he was *the Man that troubled the peace of Israel*. So likewise *Jeremy* was accused as well as *Jesus*, for prophesying against the *Temple*. Add moreover, what the ancient *Doctors* of the *Hebrews* foretold; how that in the times of the *Messias*, Men should be *as impudent as Dogs*, *as stubborn as Asses*, and *as cruel as wild Beasts*. God himself, foreseeing long before, how most of the *Jews* would stand affected in the time of the *Messias*, said, it would come to pass, that *they* should become his *people*, who were not his *people*; and of all the *Cities* and *Towns* of the *Jews*, scarce one or two would go to the *holy mountain*; Howbeit,

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be it, that which was wanting in *their number*, should be supplied by *strangers*: Also that the *Messias* should be a *downfal* to the *Hebrews*: and this Stone which the Builders refused, should be put in the *chief place* for the joyning together of the *work*.

SECT. XXI.

Answer to the Objection, that many Gods are worshipped by the Christians.

THERE remain yet two accusations to be answered, which the *Jews* bring both against our *Christian Doctrine* and *Worship*. The first is, in that they say, we *Christians* do worship many *Gods*.

But we answer, that this is nothing but a wrested explication of another's opinion, out of hatred. For, why should this be more objected against us *Christians*, than against *Philo* the *Jew*, who oftentimes makes *three* to be in *God*; and calls the *reason* or the *word* of *God*, the *name* of *God*; the *maker* of the *World*; neither *unbegotten*, as is *God* the *Father* of all, nor so begotten as *Men* are? Whom both *Philo*, and *Moses* the *Son* of *Nachman*, call also the *Angel* or *Ambassador*, who takes care of the *Universe*: Or against the *Cabalists*, who distinguish *God* into three *lights*, which some of them call by the same names that *Christians* do; to wit, of the *Father*, of the *Son* or the *Word*, and of the *Holy Ghost*. And let me not omit what is agreed upon by all the *Hebrews*, that the *Spirit* wherewith the *Prophets*

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were moved and inspired, is not any created thing, and yet it is distinguished from the *sender* thereof: as also that which they commonly call *schechina*. Now many of the *Hebrews* have taught, that that *divine power* which they term *wisdom*, shall dwell in the *Messias*; whence by the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, the *Messias* is called the *Word of God*: as by *David*, *Esaïas*, and others, He is honoured with that august name of *GOD* and *LORD*.

SECT. XXII.

And that a humane Nature is worshipped.

WITH like facility may we answer the other *Objection*, which they alledge against us, saying, that we exhibit unto the creature that *worship* and *honour*, which is due unto *God the Creator*. For we say, that no other honour or *worship* is given by us unto the *Messias*, than is required by the *second*, and the *hundred and tenth Psalms*. The former whereof after a sort was fulfilled in *David*, but after a more excellent manner belongs unto the *Messias*, as *David Kimchi* himself, a great adversary of *Christians*, doth acknowledge. And the latter can be expounded of no other, but of the *Messias*. For that which some later *Jews* have devised of *Abraham*, *David*, and *Hezekiah*, is but vain and frivolous. The said *Psalm* is *David's*, as the *Hebrew Inscription* doth shew: That then, which *David* saith was said unto his *Lord*, can neither be applyed to *David* himself, nor to *Hezekiah*; who amongst *David's* Posterity did excel *David* in

in nothing. And *Abraham* had no singular *Priesthood*, but was blessed of *Melchisedeck*, as the less of the greater. Likewise that which follows concerning the Scepter, that should go out of *Sion*, and come to the uttermost Coasts, doth plainly appertain unto the *Messias*; as is manifest by other like places, which doubtless are meant of the *Messias*: nor did the more ancient *Hebrews* and Paraphrasts otherwise understand it. Now I may as well believe upon the bare credit of his Disciples, because of their most eminent integrity and honesty, that it is *Jesus of Nazareth*, in whom properly these things are fulfilled; as the *Jews* believe *Moses* in those matters, which without any other witness, himself affirmed, were delivered to him of *God*. But besides this, there are many and most forcible arguments of that most excellent power, which we say *Jesus* hath obtained; As namely, in that he was seen of many, after he was risen from the dead: And many beheld him when he was taken up into *Heaven*: *Devils* also were cast out, and diseases were cured only by his name: The gifts of *Tongues* were given to his Disciples, which *Jesus* himself promised should be signs of his Kingdom.

Add unto these, that his *Scepter*, that is, the Word of the Gospel, being gone out of *Sion*, is run through the World (and that not by humane help, but by the Divine Power alone) to the utmost parts of the Earth: whose people and their Kings He hath subdued to himself; just as the *Psalms* did plainly foretel. The *Jewish Cabalists* place a certain Son of *Enoch* in the middle, between God and Men; without any indication of such a power: with how much better reason

do we give Him that dignity, who hath so evidently demonstrated that it belongs to Him?

Neither doth this tend, in the least, to the diminution or lessening of the glory of God the Father, from whom this power of *Jesus* doth proceed; to whom it must return; and to whose honour also it ministers and serves.

SECT. XXIII.

The Conclusion of this part, with Prayer for the Jews.

BUT it is not our purpose in this Work, to make any farther curious inquiry into these matters: neither had we spoken hereof, but only to shew, that there is no wicked or absurd point in our *Christian Doctrine*, which any one can pretend, why he should not embrace a *Religion*, which is beautified and confirmed with so many *wonders*; commands such honest things; and promises such excellent *rewards*. For he that hath once received and embraced the same, must for farther *instruction* in special and particular *questions*, consult those *Books*, wherein, as we have formerly declared, the points of *Christian Religion* are contained; which that it may come to pass, we beseech the *Almighty* to *illuminate* the hearts and minds of the *Jews* with the brightness of his *truth*, and to make those prayers effectual which *Christ* himself uttered for them, even while he was hanging upon the *Cross*.

The

The SIXTH Book
OF THE
T R U T H
OF
Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

A confutation of Mahometanism: the beginning of it.

THE Sixth Book, which is opposed to the *Mahometans*, instead of a Preface, deduces the Judgments of GOD against Christians, unto the very beginning and rise of *Mahometanism*: shewing, that is, how that sincere and simple piety (which flourished among Christians, even when they were most grievously vexed and oppressed) began by little and little to wax cold; from the time that by the favour of *Constantine*, and the following Emperors, that profession was become not only safe, but also honourable: the World being, as it were, thrust into the Church.

For *first* of all, Christian Princes would needs continue fighting, and make no end of their Wars: even then, when they might have enjoyed peace and quietness.

Among the Bishops also, there were most sharp Contentions about the cheifest Sees. And as at the beginning the greatest mischiefs ensued, upon the preferring of the Tree of *Knowledge*, before the Tree of *Life*; even so then also was curious Learning more regarded than a godly Life, and Religion turned into an Art. The consequent of which was, that, after the example of those who built the Tower of *Babel*, a rash affectation of things out of their reach, bred jarring and confusion in their Language; together with discord one with another. Which the common People observing, and not knowing oft-times which way to turn themselves, they threw the blame upon the holy Scriptures, and began to avoid them, as hurtful and dangerous.

Religion also began every where to be placed, not in purity of mind, but as if *Judaism* was brought back into the World, in Rites and Ceremonies: and in such things as contain rather an excercise of the Body than any amendment of the mind: and in an eager zeal for that Party and side, which they had once chosen. Till at length it came to pass, that there were every where many Christians in Name; but very few in Deed.

GOD did not wink at these Vices of his People, but, out of the innermost parts of *Scythia* and *Germany*, poured forth, like a Deluge, immense swarms of Barbarous People into the Christian World. And when the vast slaughters which they made, proved not sufficient to correct

rect and amend the lives of those that survived; *Mahomet*, by God's just permission, sowed a new Religion in *Arabia*: and that directly opposite to the Christian Religion; but which in words expressed, in a manner, the life of the greatest part of Christians,

This Religion was first entertained by the *Saracens*; who had revolted from *Heraclius* the Emperour: and by their Arms subdued, in a short space, *Arabia*, *Syria*, *Palestine*, *Egypt*, *Persia*; and afterward possessed themselves of *Africa*, and, beyond the Sea, of *Spain* also. But the power of the *Saracens* was abated, as by others, so chiefly by the *Turks*; a Nation also very Warlike: which, after long combats with the *Saracens*, being invited to Peace, easily embraced a Religion suited to their manners; and transferred the Majesty of the Empire to themselves. The Cities of *Asia* and *Greece* were taken; and, by the growing success of their Arms, they came into *Hungary*, and the Borders of *Germany*.

SECT. II.

The overthrow of the foundation of Mahometanism, in denying inquiry into Religion.

THIS Religion, altogether contrived for the shedding of Blood, delights much in Rites and Ceremonies, and would be believed without all liberty of enquiry thereinto; whence the

Vulgar are prohibited to read their Books, that are accounted *holy*. Which thing is a manifest argument of the *iniquity* thereof: For justly may that *Merchandise* be suspected, which is obtruded upon this condition, that it be not lookt into.

It is true indeed, there is not in all Men a like *capacity* or knowledge, and quick *insight* into all things; many being led into error by *pride*; others by inordinate passion or affection; and some by custom. But the *divine goodness* forbids us to think, that those Men cannot know and find the way to *eternal salvation*, who seek it not for any by-respect of *profit* or *honour*, but with submission of themselves, and all they have unto *God*, imploring his assistance for the obtaining of the same. And since that *God* hath implanted in the *mind* of Man the power and faculty of judging, there is no part of *truth* that better deserves the employment thereof, than *that* of which we cannot be ignorant, without the danger of losing *eternal salvation*.

SECT. III.

A Proof against the Mahometans, taken out of the Books of the Hebrews and Christians, which are not corrupted.

IT is granted by *Mahomet* and his followers, that *Moses* was sent of *God*; and *Jesus* also: and that they were holy Men, which first of all published the doctrine of *Jesus*. But in the *Alcoran*, which is *Mahomet's* law, many things are recorded

recorded plain contrary to what is delivered by *Moses*, and by the Disciples of *Jesus*. Thus to give one Example for many, all the *Apostles* and Disciples of *Christ*, with one consent do *testifie*, that *Jesus* was *crucified*; that the third day he was restored to *life* again, and after that was *seen* of many. But *Mahomet* teacheth quite contrary; namely, that *Jesus* was privily conveyed into *Heaven*: and not himself, but something in his *likeness* was nailed to the *Cross*; and consequently he did not die; but the sight of the *Jews* was deluded and deceived.

This Objection cannot be put off, unless *Mahomet* say (as he doth) that the Books of *Moses* and of *Christ's* Disciples have not remained as they were at first; but have been *corrupted*. But we have confuted this *fiction* before, in the third Book.

Without doubt if any Man should say, that the *Alcoran* is corrupted, the *Mahometans* would deny it, and say, that were an answer sufficient to those that could not prove the contrary: But they cannot moreover, for the integrity of their Book, alledge such *Arguments* as we do produce, concerning the several Copies, that were in a short space dispersed throughout the World; and that not as the *Alcoran*, in one Language; which Copies were preserved by the fidelity of so many *Sells*, that varied much about other Matters.

The *Mahometans* are perswaded that in the Fourteenth Chapter of *St John*, where mention is made of sending the *Comforter*, there hath been something registred concerning *Mahomet*, which the *Christians* have rased out. But here let me ask of them, whether they think this *de-*
prava-

pravation of Scripture was committed since the time of *Mahomet*, or before.

That it hapned not after the coming of *Mahomet*, is plain, because ever since that time there have been in the world very many *Copies*, not only in the *Greek Language*, but in the *Syriac*, *Arabick*, and in parts far distant from *Arabia*, the *Ethiopick* and *Latin Tongues* of divers *translations*: all which do so agree in that place, as there cannot be shewn any diversity at all. And before the time of *Mahomet*, there was no cause of alteration: For no Man could know before his coming what *Mahomet* would teach. Yea, if the *Doctrine of Mahomet* had contained nothing contrary to the doctrine of *Jesus*, the *Christians* would have made no more difficulty to receive his *Books*, than they did to receive the *Books of Moses* and the *Hebrew Prophets*. Or suppose there had been nothing written either of the doctrine of *Jesus* or of *Mahomet*: It is but equity that *that* be received for the doctrine of *Jesus*, which all *Christians* generally agree upon; and *that* for the doctrine of *Mahomet* which all *Mahometans* do allow of.

SECT. IV.

By comparing Mahomet with Christ in their Persons.

IN the next place, let us compare the *adjuncts* and *qualities* of both their *Doctrines*, to the end we may see whether of the two is to be preferred before the other. And first, let us consider the

the authors. As for *Jesus*, *Mahomet* himself confesseth that he was the *Messias*, which was promised in the *Law* and in the *Prophets*; whom the same *Mahomet* calls the *word*, the *mind* and the *wisdom* of *God*; saying also, that he had no *Father* of mankind. But *Mahomet* (as his own followers believe) was generated and begot according to the ordinary course of nature. The life of *Jesus* was altogether *unblameable*, there being no crime that could be objected against him: But *Mahomet* a long time was a *Robber*, and always *effeminate*: *Jesus* ascended into *Heaven*, as *Mahomet* confesseth; but *Mahomet* lies yet intombed in his *Sepulchre*. Who then seeth not whether of them is to be followed?

SECT. V.

And in their Deeds.

NEXT the *dignity* of their Persons, consider we *their acts*. *Jesus* gave sight to the blind, *health* to them that were sick, and made the *lame* to walk; yea, by *Mahomet*'s own confession, he raised some from the dead. But *Mahomet* saith of himself that he was sent, not with *miracles*, but with Arms. Howbeit some of his Followers ascribe to him *miracles* also: But what kind, I pray? Only such as may either be done by *humane art*, as that of a *Dove*, which came flying to his *Ear*: or such as had no *witnesses*, as that of a *Camel*, which is said to have had some *conference* with him by night: or lastly, such as are confuted by their own absurdity; that a
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great part of the Moon fell into his lap, or into his sleeve; which he, to restore roundness to that Star, sent back again to it. Now, who will not say, that in a *doubtful case*, we ought to adhere to that Law, which hath the surer and more certain Testimonies of Divine approbation?

SECT. VI.

Also such as first embraced both Religions.

NEXT, let us see who, and what manner of Persons they were, that first received these several *Laws*. They that first embraced the *Law of Jesus*, were such as feared God, Men of a plain and innocent life: Now it stands not with the *Goodness* of God to suffer such Men to be gull'd and cheated, either by bewitching speeches, or by an appearance of Miracles. But they that first received *Mahometanism* were Thieves and Robbers; Men estranged from all *humanity* and *piety*.

SECT. VII.

The manner how both their Laws were propagated.

I N the next place follows, the *manner* how both these *Religions* were propagated and spread abroad. As for *Christianity*, we have shewn more than once that it was enlarged and amplified by the *Miracles*, not only of *Christ*, but also
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of his *Disciples*, and those that *succeeded* them: as likewise by the very *patient* *enduring* of the torments and punishments that *Christians* suffered. But the *Doctors* of *Mahometanism* wrought no *miracles* at all: neither did they suffer any greivous persecutions, or cruel kinds of *death* for their *profession*: But it is a Religion which follows, where Arms go before: of which it is an accessary, and nothing of it self. Nor do they themselves bring any better *argument* for the *truth* thereof, than their *good success* in their Wars, and the *largeness* of their Empire; than which nothing in this point is more *deceitful* and uncertain.

They condemn the *worship* and services of the *Pagans*: and yet we know what great *Victories* were won by the *Persians*, *Macedonians* and *Romans*: and how ample their *Dominions* were. Neither have the *Mahometans* themselves had always *good success* with their Armies. The slaughters and great overthrows that they have received in many places, both by *Sea* and by *Land* are not unknown. They are now *banished* quite out of all *Spain*.

There is nothing that is liable to such uncertain *alterations*, nothing that may be *common* both to good and bad, which can be a certain *note* of *true Religion*; much less can their Arms, which are so *unjust*, that oftentimes they fall upon *people* that do not any way molest or offend them, nor are known to them by any injury: in so much that all the *pretence* they have for their Arms, is only Religion: which is most irreligious.

For there is no *true worship* of God, but what proceeds from a *willing mind*. And the will is
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to be wrought upon by *good instruction* and gentle *perswasion*, but not by *threats* or violence. He that is *compelled* to believe, doth not believe at all, but plays the *Hypocrite*, and feigns himself to *believe*, that he may escape and avoid some danger or punishment. And he that by threats or sense of *punishment*, will force another Man's assent, shews by that very proceeding, that he distrusts his *arguments*. Again, they themselves destroy this very *pretence* of *Religion*; in that they suffer any people that live under their Dominion, to use what *Religion* they please: yea, and sometimes they will openly *acknowledge*, that *Christians* may be saved by their own *Law*.

SECT. VIII.

The Precepts of both Religions compared.

Furthermore, let us compare the several *commandments* of both *Religions*; the one whereof commandeth *patience*; yea, and *love*, even to them that *hate* us: But the other revenge. In the one the bond of *matrimony* is kept firm and inviolable between the married parties, by a *mutual bearing* with one anothers humors: But in the other there is licence granted to depart and be *divorced*. Here the Husband performs himself what he requires of his *Wife*, and by his own example *teacheth* her to fasten her affection upon *him alone*: But there they may have *Wives* after *Wives*, there being still new incentives and fresh provocations to lust. Here *Religion* is planted *within*, and rooted in the very heart and
Soul,

Soul, that it being well cultivated, may bring forth *fruit* profitable for *Mankind*, but there *Religion* spends almost its whole force in *Circumcision*, and in some other things, that of themselves are neither *good* nor *bad*. Finally here, in *Christianity*, a moderate use of Meats and Wine is allowed of: but there in *Mahometanism* Men are forbidden to eat *Swines flesh*, and to drink *Wine*: which notwithstanding is a great gift of *God*, beneficial both for body and mind, if it be soberly taken.

And truly, it is no wonder, if some *childish rudiments* were taught before the most perfect *Law*, as that of *Christ* is: but after the *promulgation* thereof, to return again to *types* and *figures* were preposterous. Neither can any just reason be given why, after *Christian Religion*, which is far the best, it should be fit that any other should be brought forth.

SECT. IX

Answer to the Mahometans Objection, concerning the Son of God.

THE *Mahometans* tell us, they are not a little displeased with us, for saying that *God* hath a *Son*, seeing he useth not a *Wife*: As though the word *Son* could not have a more divine signification in *God*. But *Mahomet* himself attributes many things as *dishonourable* and *ill-be-seeming* *God*, as if he should be said to have a *Wife*.

Thus

Thus he saith, that God had a *cold hand*, which himself *knew* by experience: that God was carried in a *chair*, and the like.

Howbeit, when we say, that *Jesus* is the Son of God, we do but signify the same thing that he means, when he calls him the *word* of God: For the *word* is after a sort begotten of the *mind*. Add farther, that he was born of a *Virgin*, only by the *operation* of God, supplying the *virtue* or efficacy of a *Father*; that by the *power* of God, he was carried up into *Heaven*: all which being confessed even by *Mahomet* himself, do shew that *Jesus* by a singular prerogative and peculiar right, may and ought to be called the Son of God.

SECT. X.

Many absurd things in the Books of Mahometans.

BUT on the other side, it would be long to relate how many things there are, contrary to the truth of *History*; and many things very *ridiculous* in the *writings* of the *Mahometans*. Such is that *fable* of a fair and beautiful *Woman*, that learned a solemn *charm* or Song of some Angels that were drunk, whereby she was wont to ascend into the Sky, and likewise descend again; and ascending once a great height into Heaven, she was caught of God, and there fixed, and made that Star which is called *Venus*.

Like to this, is that of a *mouse* in *Noba's* Ark, that was bred of an *Elephant's* Dung: and a *Cat* of the breath of a *Lion*.

More

More specially, that most *notorious fiction*, concerning *Death* to be changed into a *Ram*, that must remain in the middle space between *Heaven* and *Hell*: And the Fable of sweating out their good chear in the other life: When likewise (they imagine) there shall be whole *troops* of *Women* assigned to every *Man* for pleasure of carnal copulation. All which are so very egregious absurdities, that whosoever believes them, deserves to be *stupified* and given over to a *reprobate sense* for his iniquity; specially such a one as lives where the *light* of the *Gospel* shineth.

S E C T. XI.

A Conclusion directed unto Christians, admonishing them of their duty, upon the occasion of what hath formerly been handled.

AND thus having ended this last *disputation* against the *Mohometans*, there follows a conclusion of the whole, not to aliens or strangers, but to all sorts of *Christians*, of what Name, Nation, or Quality soever they be: Shewing briefly the *use* or *application* of what hath hitherto been delivered; to the end those things may be followed and sought after, which are *good*; and on the contrary, the *evil* eschewed.

First of all, that they lift up *pure hands* and *hearts* unto that *God*, who of nothing made all *visible* and *invisible* things; having sure confidence in him, that his *providence* and *care* watcheth over us; seeing that without his *permission*;

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not so much as a *sparrow* falls to the ground. And let them not *fear* those which can only kill the *body*, but rather let them *fear* him that hath like *power* both over *soul* and *body*. And let them not only trust in *God* the *Father*, but also in *Jesus Christ* his *Son*, since there is no other *name* upon *Earth* by which we can be saved: And this they may rightly do, if they be verily persuaded that *eternal life* is prepared, not for such as in *word* only call *God* their *Father*, and *Jesus* their *Lord*, but for such as frame their life according to the *will* of *Jesus*, and their *Father* which is in *Heaven*.

Furthermore, *Christians* are admonished faithfully, and with due care to preserve the *Doctrine* of *Christ*, as a most *precious treasure*: And for this cause, let them often *read* and *meditate* the *Books* of the *Holy Scripture*, whereby no *Man* can be *deceived*, unless first he *deceive* himself. For the *Authors* and *Pen-Men* of those *Writings* were more *just* and full of *Divine Inspiration*, than that they would deprive us of necessary *truths*, or cover and *conceal* the same with any clouds.

Howbeit, for the right *understanding* hereof, we must bring a mind disposed and prepared to obedience: which if we do, then nothing shall be hid from us, which ought to be *believed*, *hoped* for, or done by us: And by this means, that *holy spirit* will be cherished and excited in us, which is given us for a *pledge* and earnest of our future happiness.

Moreover, I deter *Christians* from imitating the *Pagans*: first, in their worship of false *Gods*, which are nothing but vain *names*, which evil *Demons* use to alienate our minds and affections from

from the *worship* of the *true God*. Wherefore we cannot possibly participate with them in their *services*, and expect to receive benefit by the *Sacrifice* of *Christ*. Secondly, neither may the *Christians* imitate the Heathen in their licentious and dissolute manner of *Life*; having no other Law, than what is suggested by *lust*, and prompted by sensual desire: from which Christians ought to be far removed; who should not only far excel the vicious and prophane *Pagans*, but likewise the *Lawyers* and *Pharisees* among the *Jews*; whose righteousness consisting only in some outward *performances*, could never bring them to the heavenly *Kingdom*.

Circumcision that is made with hands, is now nothing worth, but it is the inward *Circumcision* of the heart, the keeping of *Gods Commandments*, the *new creature*, *faith* that is perfected in love, which make Men known to be *true Israelites* and *mystical Jews*, that is, praisers of *God*, and *commendable* in his sight. The distinction of *meats*, the *Sabbaths* and *feast-days* were but types and shadows of things, which exist in *Christ* and in *Christians*.

In like manner by occasion of *Mahometanism*, these Admonitions are given, that our Lord *Jesus* foretold, that after his time there should arise *false Christ* and *false Prophets*, which should *lye*, and say they were sent of *God*. But suppose that an *Angel* should come from *Heaven*, yet we may not receive or entertain any other *Doctrine* than that which *Christ* hath left us, *confirmed* by so many *testimonies*. For *God*, who at *sundry times*, and in *divers manners* spake unto the *godly* that lived in *times past*, hath in these last days *spoken* unto us by his *Son*, the Lord of all things, the

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brightness of his *Father's glory*, and the express *Image* of his substance, by whom all things are *created* that ever were or shall be; who upholdeth and governeth all things by his *power*, and having *purged* our sins, is now set at the right hand of *God*, and hath obtained a dignity above *Angels*: and therefore nothing can be expected more magnificent than this *Law-giver*.

Upon the same occasion *Christians* are remembered, that the *weapons* of *Christ* and of their *Christian Warfare*, are not such as *Mahomet* used, but *spiritual*, able to cast down *strong holds*, and every thing that exalteth it self against the *knowledge* of *God*. For our *buckler*, we have the shield of *faith*, whereby we may repel the fiery darts of the *Devil*: For a *breast-plate* we have *righteousness*, or integrity of life: The *hope* of eternal salvation is a helmet, which may cover the *weakest part*: And for a *Sword*, we have *Words* delivered from *God*, which pierce into the most *inward* parts of the *Soul*.

After this, follows the *exhortation* to mutual *concord*, which *Christ* at his departure so *solemnly*, and with such *earnestness*, commended unto his *Disciples*. There ought not to be *many Masters* and *Doctors* amongst us, but we must have one *Master*, even *Jesus Christ*. All *Christians* are baptized into one *name*, wherefore there ought to be no *Sects* or *Divisions* among them: for the cure and remedy of which *evils*, those *Apostolical sayings* are suggested; as, *let no man think more highly of himself than he ought to think*; but let Men be wise with *sobriety*, according as *God* hath dealt to every Man the measure of *faith*. If any do not so well conceive and rightly *understand* all things as they ought, then
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their *weakness* must be born with: that so without any brawlings or fallings out, they may be sweetly united and knit together with us. If any do excel the rest in *understanding*, it is but meet also that they surpass them in love, in holy *affection* and *endeavours* to do them good. And as for those that in some points are of *different opinion* from such as hold the *truth*; God's leisure must be waited for, until it please him to reveal the same *truth*, that yet lies hid from them: and in the mean while those things, which are agreed upon, must be stedfastly kept and duly practised.

We know now in part only, but the time shall come, when all things shall be known most plainly, and after a perspicuous manner. This also I beg of every one, that they do not *unprofitably* detain the *talent* committed to them upon trust; but that they *endeavour* by all means possible to win others unto *Christ*. For which purpose, we must not only use good exhortations, and wholesome *speeches*, but also the *example* of good life; that so the *goodness* of our *Master* may appear by his *servants*, and the purity of the *Law* by our *laudable Actions*.

Lastly, My Discourse returning thither, where it began, I intreat such Readers, as are my Country-Men, that if hereby they reap any *good*, they would give *thanks* to God for it: And if any thing be less pleasing to them, they would have a regard both to the *common infirmity* of man's nature that is prone to *Errour*, and to the *time* and *place* wherein this work was rather hastily brought forth, than elaborately composed.

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THE
SEVENTH BOOK
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Christian Religion.

Against the present
ROMAN CHURCH.

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The SEVENTH Book
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SECT. I.

An Introduction, shewing what makes the Addition of another Book necessary.

IF those Apostolical Exhortations, which conclude the last Book, had been carefully followed; there would have been no need of saying any more, for the confirmation of Mens minds in the belief of the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Religion. But the unhappy differences which are among Christians, and which are maintained with unspeakable animosities and hatreds (nay with anathema's also, which one part pronounces against the rest) have made many Men doubtful which of these hold the true Christian Faith, for which the Apostle exhorts
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us most earnestly to contend ; and in this doubtfulness, there are some who embrace none at all.

For we see the Eastern Church disjoynted from the Western : and the Western divided into *three* great parts, every one of which condemn the other two : and all of them are subdivided into several little parties by variety of opinions ; for which they contend with the same zeal, that they do for the Faith of Christ. Which is thereby disgraced ; and reputed by some to be of no greater certainty, than those dubious opinions.

SECT. II.

Divisions among Christians no such objection against Christianity, as is imagined.

BUT to a considering Man, this will be no occasion of scandal : but rather confirm him more in the true Christian Faith ; which every one of us ought to preserve with the greatest care, as a most inestimable Treasure. For, as this is common to every Religion, to have many disputes about it, and different opinions in it ; and as Christ and his Apostles foretold there would many *false Christs, and false Apostles, and false Prophets* arise (as was said before in the end of the foregoing Book) who would lye, and say they were sent, when they were not, introducing false doctrines, and calling them by the Name of his Religion ; and as they give us a good reason also why it should be so ; that Mens probity and sincerity might be tried, and brought hereby to the touch-stone, and that their diligence

gence and care in preserving themselves might be exercised : So, blessed be our Lord, the true Christian Religion is still retained, and kept intire every where, by all these disagreeing Parties; notwithstanding the fierce quarrels they have one with another. As appears by this (which is a short, easie, and certain way to our satisfaction in this matter) that the Faith into which they are all baptized, is one and the same without any variation. That is, they all enter into the Church at the very same Gate; and upon the same terms and conditions, neither more nor less, are made members of Christ, and have a title given them, if they live according to this Faith, unto eternal Salvation.

SECT. III.

As appears even in the Roman Church, which hath given the greatest scandal.

THE Church of *Rome* it self, which now makes the greatest differences in the Christian World, requires nothing more at this day to be believed by those, that are by Baptism received into the Church of Christ; but only those things which are contained in the *Creed*, commonly called the *Apostles*. This *Creed* is recited there by the Priest, and this alone, when he comes to the Font; and he interrogates the Persons to be baptized (if they be adult) or their undertakers (if they be Infants) about no other belief. Upon the profession of which, he bids them enter into the holy Church of God, that they

they may receive the Celestial blessing from the Lord Jesus Christ, and have a part with Him and with his Saints: And having again examined adult Persons, asking them, *Do you believe in God the Father Almighty? &c.* and mentioning no other Articles of Faith, he baptizes them; and declares them to be regenerate, and to have remission of all sins. And so do we here; nor is there any different practice in any other part of the Christian World; but every where it is sufficient to consent to this Creed: which is nothing but a brief explication, what we are to believe concerning the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, in whose Names we are baptized.

If there were any thing beyond this, which we are necessarily bound to believe, it should have been then propounded when we were admitted into the state of Christianity. For Baptism gives us a right and title to Salvation (if we do not forfeit it afterward by apostasie, or by a wicked life) and this Faith (with a promise to live according to it) gives us a right to Baptism.

Herein indeed the *Roman Church* contradicts it self in decreeing many other Articles of belief, without which it declares Men cannot be saved; and yet receiving Men at Baptism into a state of Salvation without demanding their consent to any such Articles. But so they do in many other things, and cannot avoid it: while they forsake the ancient Universal Rule; and set up their own private Authority, to impose what they please under pain of Damnation.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

*But both contradicts it self, and departs from
the Ancient and truly Catholick Church.*

FOR that no such things, as they would now oblige all Christians to believe, were anciently exacted, it appears most manifestly by *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*, (to name no others) in several places. Who call the *Creed* now mentioned, *the Rule of Truth, and the Rule of Faith*: which the Church throughout all the World, saith *Irenæus* (though it be dispersed to the most extream parts of the Earth) received from the Apostles and their Disciples: and believes, as if there were but one Soul and one Heart, in so many Men: and with a perfect consent preaches and teaches, and delivers these things, as having but one mouth. For though there be divers Languages in the World, yet one and the same Tradition prevails every where: For neither the Churches in Germany believe otherwise, or deliver any thing else; nor they in Spain; nor they in France; nor they in the East; nor they in Egypt; nor they in Lybia; nor they that are founded in the midst of the World. But as the Sun is one and the same in the whole World: So is the preaching of the Truth, inlightning all Men, who will come to the knowledge of it. And neither he who is most eloquent among the Governours of the Church, preaches any thing different, (for no man is above his Master) nor doth he that is weakest in speech lessen in the least this Tradition. For there being one and the same Faith, he that hath most to say cannot enlarge it; nor he that hath least, diminish it.

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Thus they declared their minds in those early days: when there was no Catholick Man or Woman in the World, required to believe any of those Doctrines, now in Controversie between us and the *Roman Church*: (and set down in the Creed of Pope *Pius IV.* as necessary to Salvation) but they all contented themselves with the simple belief of those things, which the Apostles have delivered in their Creed; the greatest Men in the Church delivering no more, nor the meanest saying less. And with this, wise and good Men satisfied themselves in times succeeding, as appears by this remarkable Passage of *St. Hilary* in his little Book, which he himself delivered to the Emperour *Constantius*. Where he thus complains, *Faith is now enquired after; as if we had none. Faith must be set down in writing; as if it were not in the heart. Being regenerated by Faith, we are now taught what to believe; as if that Regeneration could have been without Faith.* WE LEARN CRHIST AFTER BAPTISM; AS IF THERE COULD HAVE BEEN ANY BAPTISM, WITHOUT FAITH IN CHRIST.

SECT. V.

Christianity therefore is not there in its Purity; but much corrupted.

WHICH is a sufficient Argument to prove that the Christian Religion is not sincerely preserved in that Church: and ought to with-hold us from joyning with them, in imposing thus upon the Christian World; and thereby

thereby breaking the Bond of Unity ; and turning Men away from the Faith, by the palpable falsities, and absurd mixtures, which are brought into it : and that as necessary parts of the Faith of Christ. To the adulterating of which we ought by no means to consent, but maintain it in that purity wherein the Apostles delivered it to their Successors ; as we find it set down in the Works of a great many following Doctours of the Church ; whose Names I forbear, but are ready at hand to make good what I quoted just now out of *Irenæus*. Who acknowledges him for a sincere Christian, *who holds fast τὸν καλὸν καὶ ἀληθινόν* (as *Epiphanius* recites his words, which were then extant in *Greek*) *That Rule of Faith, which he received in Baptism, firm and unmoveable.* He cannot be a Heretick who thus believes on the Son of God, in the sense wherein the *Nicene Creed* (not adding any new Article of Faith, but only declaring what was believed from the beginning) hath explained the Word : But they are *Schismatics* who call him so ; and will not admit him into their Communion, unless he consent to other things, and hold them to be equally certain, and necessary, with the ancient Rule of Faith.

S E C T. VI.

Answer to an Evasion from the force of the foregoing Argument.

TO pretend that all those Articles of Faith, which they now impose, though not expressly mentioned in the Creed, yet are contained in one Article of it, viz. *in the belief of the holy Catholick Church*: is in effect to make all the rest of the Creed unnecessary, and to establish this sole Rule of Faith in the room of it. For if by believing the Catholick Church, we are to understand, as they would have us, whatsoever the Catholick Church propounds: then it had been enough to have said to those *Catechumens* that came for Baptism, *Do you believe in the Holy Catholick Church?* And to add any more had been utterly superfluous.

But the vanity of this farther appears, in that none of the ancient Doctors who have expounded the Creed (and there are many of them) have given any such sense of that Article of the *Catholick Church*: Nay, it was not in the most ancient forms of Faith: nor doth the Church truly Catholick teach any thing as necessary to be believed to salvation, but what is contained in the Creed. For we do in their own sense, believe the *Catholick Church*; but not the *Roman Catholick Church*, (which their Creed will have to be the Mother and Mistress of all Churches:) because, to omit many other absurdities which are in it, there was a *Catholick Church* before there was a *Roman*: and to say, that they believe

believe the Catholick Church, meaning thereby the *Roman*, is nothing more than to say, they believe themselves.

S E C T. VII.

Their absurd Explication of the Unity of the Catholick Church.

NOTHING therefore can be farther from the Truth, than that Explication of the *Unity of the Catholick Church*; which is delivered in the *Roman Catechism*, published by the Authority of the same Pope Pius IV. in pursuance of the Council of Trent. Wherein the *Catechumen* is taught to believe and profess, that the Catholick Church is one, not only because of one Faith (and other reasons mentioned by the Apostle, *Ephes. iv.*) and because it is subject to one invisible Governour, which is Christ: But, *because it is subject also to one visible Governour, who holds the Roman Chair, the legitimate Successor of St. Peter. Concerning whom it is the unanimous opinion of all the Fathers, that this visible Head is necessary to constitute, and conserve the Unity of the Church. and to this Head or Pastor, Christ hath given the authority of ruling and governing the whole Church, as the Vicar and minister of his Power.*

Thus that *Catechism* teaches, in the First Part, the IX. Article, *n.* 11, 12, 13. Which (besides that it is confuted by the plain demonstration now mentioned; that Christ had a Catholick Church, which had Unity in it self, when there

was no *Roman Church*) is directly contrary to the constant Doctrine, not only of the Scripture, but of all the Fathers; (whose consent they falsely boast of) and of many Popes of *Rome*; and of Councils also, both general and particular; even of the Councils of *Lateran* and *Trent*; which by approving the *Five First* General Councils, who condemn the Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome*, do, in effect, condemn it themselves.

SECT. VIII.

Which forbids us to join in communion with them upon such Terms.

TO that Church then we ought to adhere, which hath kept the Rule of Faith, once delivered to the Saints, simple and unmixed with humane inventions. Which if we admit, as necessary to Salvation; we betray the Truth of Christ, and are false and unjust to innumerable Christian Brethren; who, by Baptism, are admitted into a state of Salvation, but hereby unmercifully cut off from the Body of Christ; though they have that Faith, which makes them true members of it.

This is the great Crime of the *Roman Church*; and may suffice, instead of all other demonstrations, to prove that they have corrupted themselves, and departed from the simplicity that is in Christ. For this very Article alone (which is a part of their Faith) that there is no Salvation, but by Union with the *Roman Catholick Church*,
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and that by subjection to it; thrusts out of Heaven, not only the ancient Christian pious Emperours, who refused such subjection: But many of their ancient Popes, who acknowledged their subjection was due to the Christian Emperours; together with the ancient Patriarchs and Fathers, assembled in many Councils; and the most famous Christian Churches; the most glorious Martyrs and Saints of Christ, that the best times of Christianity have known; and to say nothing of after Ages, the present Christians of *Greece, Russia, Armenia, Syria, Ethiopia*; who by this Article of subjection to the *Catholick Roman Church*, are all excluded from Christian Communion, and must perish everlastingly.

For *Bellonius* says, that in his Travels he met with Nine sorts of Christians at *Jerusalem*; Eight of which Nine know nothing of this Universal Bishop, or do not regard him: and of the Ninth, there is scarce half that acknowledges his Authority.

And yet there are Men among them, of no mean note and number, who have the confidence to tell us, that by the *Catholick Church*, which we are bound to believe, is to be understood the Bishop of *Rome*: whose Declarations, when he will determine any thing to be of Faith, we all ought to receive. And though we are assured, as much as we are that there was such a Person as *St. Peter*, that Christ never gave him (much less his Successors) any Authority at all over his whole Church: Yet now, to deny the Pope's Supremacy is such a Heresie, that let a man be never so Orthodox in all other points of the Catholick Faith, this alone is sufficient to make him be excommunicated and cut off from the Body of Christ.

Witness our King *Henry VIII.* who was excommunicated, and his Kingdom given away for no other fault, by a Bull of *Paul the Third*: who affirms in the beginning of that Bull, that herein he acted by Divine authority; *which* (according as God saith in the Prophet *Jeremiah*) *had set him over Nations and Kingdoms, to root up and destroy, as well as to build and plant; having the supreme power over all Kings and People, throughout the whole Earth.* Which certainly is such new Language, never known in the Church for many Ages; that they who are not convinced thereby of the corruption of Christian Religion in the *Roman Church*, have their Eyes blinded with the Worldly Splendor of it.

SECT. IX.

But on the other side, not to slight Episcopal Authority.

YET on the other hand, it must be acknowledged that this enormous power which they have usurped, is a very strong proof of the high Authority of Christian Bishops in the Church; and of the great reverence that was paid to them by Christian People. Who otherwise would never have thus submitted to their will and pleasure; had not the obedience, which they had been wont always to yield to their authority, disposed them to be brought by little and little under an absolute subjection.

Nor would there have been reason for those Cautions, which *St. Peter* gives to the Governors of

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of God's Church (not at *Rome*, but elsewhere, 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3.) *not to Lord it over them*: if they had not been invested with a power, which all Christians revered so much, that it might more easily be abused, than contemned; and sooner persuade People to follow them with a blind obedience, than to slight their judgment, and refuse to conform to their Injunctions.

And therefore whosoever they are that now despise all Ecclesiastical Authority, we may be sure they have swerved from the true Principles of Christianity: and they also are altogether inexcusable, who shake off the Episcopal Government, and refuse to be subject to it, under a pretence that there ought to be an equality among Christ's Ministers. Which as it is against the practice of the whole Church for many Ages, from the beginning: So directly opposes the Institution of Christ, who sets his Apostles in a superiority to the *LXX*; as his Apostles set such Men as *Timothy* and *Titus* in a superiority over the Presbyteries of those Churches, which they could no longer attend themselves.

SECT. X.

Arguments enough in the foregoing Books, to prove the true Christian Religion not to be sincerely preserved in the Roman Church: one is their way of worship.

IT would be easie to shew how much the *Roman* Church hath deviated from the Rule of Faith, by considering particularly the falsity of
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every one of those Doctrines which they have added to the ancient Creeds. But it will be more proper in so short a Treatise as this, only to bring to the Reader's mind some Principles in the foregoing Books; which direct us as plainly to reject Popery, (and upon the very same ground) as those false Religions, for whose constitution he alledges them.

And *First*, Let the Reader again weigh his Arguments against the Worship of the *Pagans*, and he will find them, in several things as strong against the Worship of the *Roman Church*: whose Practices, it will hereby appear, are no less faulty than their Faith. As for example, in the Worship of Angels and Saints.

For the former, They should not only (as he discourses there, *Book IV.*) in their very Worship, make an evident difference between the most high God, and those Angels, to whom they commend themselves, (which they do not do in the *Roman Church*, but quite contrary, in the external Acts of Adoration have none that are appropriated to God alone, but are all common to him with others, as *Adoration, Invocation, burning Incense, nay offering the Sacrifice of the Mass in their Honour, and making Vows to them*) but be satisfied also what order there is among the Angels; what good may be expected from each of them; and what honour the most high God is willing should be bestowed upon every one of them. All which being wanting, (for there is nothing revealed about such matters) it is plain from thence, how uncertain that Religion is, and how much safer it would be for them to betake themselves, as we do, to the Worship of Almighty God alone. Especially for that, to whomsoever

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He is favourable, to them the holy Angels must needs be kind and serviceable (though no Petitions be made to them) being the Ministers and Servants of the most High: who hath reveal'd this to us, that He hath made them all subject to Jesus Christ; to be sent forth by Him, for the good of those who shall be heirs of Salvation. In the number of which, they, above all others, have reason to hope to be, who have so great a respect to his Majesty, and confidence in his Goodness, that for fear of offending him, they dare Worship none but Himself alone: resting assured, He will deal well with them, even for this reason; because they have such a regard to him, as not to presume without his warrant and authority, so much as to recommend themselves to him, by any Angel in Heaven, though never so great; but by his only begotten Son Jesus Christ alone, who is the Head of them all, and whom he hath consecrated to be our perpetual Intercessor with Him.

The like we may say of the Worship of Saints; to whom all Prayers are fruitless and vain, unless they be able to do something for their Supplicants. Of which they have no certainty; nor is there more ground to say that they can, than that they cannot; but rather less ground: since it is inconceivable how they should be able to hear and assist so many, as address themselves to the same Saint, in several far distant parts of the World: without supposing them to be equal to our blessed Saviour (for they have as many, if not more, Supplicants, as He) by such an Union as he hath with the Divinity.

They worship also, which is still worse, such for Saints, as never were in being; and others

whose Saintship there is too much reason to question, being apparently guilty of such crimes, as are inconsistent with it. For instance, our *Thomas a Becket* (by whose blood, they have prayed our Lord Christ, that they may ascend into Heaven; and do still pray, (upon *Decemb. 29.*) that they who implore his help *may have the saving effect of his Petitions*) whom our Forefathers, even in the time of Popery, look'd upon as a Perjured Person, and as a Traytor: being not only called so by the King: but in Parliament accused of Treason, the Bishops as well as others being present; and the Bishop of *Winchester* pronouncing the sentence against him.

In short, the Devotions of the *Roman Church* are so like the ancient Idolatry; that the cunningest Man in the World cannot find any difference, without a great many nice and subtil distinctions: which in practice make no difference at all.

SECT. XI.

Another is the way of promoting their Religion.

THERE is this Argument also against it (as *Grotius* speaks of *Paganism*, Book 4. Sect. 10.) taken from the Religion it self; that if it be not supported by humane power, or policy, immediately it falls to the ground. For as the Church of *Rome* (it hath been observed by wise Men of our own) got and increased its absolute Authority over Mens Consciences, by obtruding

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on the World supposititious Writings, and corrupting the Monuments of former times; by false Miracles, and forging false stories; by Wars also and Persecutions; by Massacres, Treasons and Rebellions; in short, by all manner of carnal means, whether violent or fraudulent: so take away these supports, and that Religion cannot stand by its own strength.

And truly his reason in the *Third* Section of the same Book against the *Paganish* worship, that it was from evil Spirits, because they instigated their Worshippers to destroy them that worshipped one God; holds good still (if there be any force in it) to prove the *Roman* Church not to be acted by the good Spirit of God; because they would not let those live (had they sufficient power) who worship only one God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and content themselves with the Belief before mentioned, into which they were baptized; not presuming to superadd any thing else, as necessary to salvation.

And which is worse, while they have been most cruel to those, who for fear of offending God, dare not allow the worship they give to Saints, which they think belongs to him alone; nor fall down before the Sacrament and adore it, as very God Himself: They have tolerated such without any censure, who have raised *St. Francis* into an equality with, if not superiority unto our blessed Saviour; and made the blessed Virgin a kind of Goddess; nay called the *Pope* the King of kings, and the Lord of lords; giving him such a power over all Kings and Kingdoms, as sober men among themselves are ashamed to own. Which is just after the example of the *Pagans*, among whom, as *Grotius* observes,
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it was lawful for the *Poets*, to sing what they pleased, though never so lewd, concerning the Gods, and for the *Epicures* to take Providence out of the World: while the *Jews* were made ridiculous, and the Christians most barbarously used, as if they had been the vilest of Mankind. Of which more anon.

SECT. XII.

The Romanists themselves overthrow their own Religion.

THAT Argument also which he urges for Christianity against the *Pagans*, that the chief Points of Christian Doctrine were acknowledged by some or other of the best and greatest among them; may be used by us also, for the Faith to which we now hold: there being several learned Writers in the *Roman Church*, who have acknowledged our belief to be sufficient to Salvation; and the Points which they have superadded, having been look'd upon by the most excellent Persons among them, only as meer Scholastical Opinions; and not certain Truths, of which we can have a full assurance.

Here I might shew, how the *sufficiency of the Scripture* hath been owned; and the *Apostles Creed* likewise confessed to contain all things that are absolutely necessary to be believed to Salvation. But because I would not have this Book swell above the bigness of the foregoing, I shall let them alone: and instance only in the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, which is now pressed with

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with so much violence upon the Christian World; but most plainly condemned by *Gratian* in their *Canon Law*, and by the *Author*, or *Authors*, of the *Canon of the Mass* it self.

About the former we may be satisfied out of the *Decretum*, if we look into the *Third* part, and the *second* Distinction, concerning *Consecration*. Where in the *XLVIII. chap.* out of *St. Austin* and *Prosper*, he says, *The heavenly Bread, which is truly Christ's flesh, suo modo, after a sort or manner is called the Body of Christ: whereas revera, in truth, it is the Sacrament of his Body, which was hanged upon the Cross: and the sacrificing of the Flesh of Christ, by the hand of the Priest, is called his death, and passion, and crucifixion, not in the Truth of the thing, but in a signifying mystery.* Which words are so directly against the present sence of the *Roman Church*, that no Protestant can speak more expressly and clearly against it; nor desire a plainer confutation of it; unless it be that of the *Gloss* upon those words, which is this: *The Celestial Sacrament, which truly represents the Flesh of Christ, is said to be the Body of Christ; but improperly: whence it is said to be so, suo modo, sed non rei veritate, after a manner, but not in the truth of the thing. So the sence is, it is called Christ's Body; that is, it is signified thereby.*

And if we look farther into the *LII. chapter*, we find he saith Christ was sacrificed but once, in semet ipso, in himself when he hung upon the Cross, &c. Yet is offered daily, in Sacramento, in the Sacrament, which the Church frequents in memory of that thing. Which Sacrifice in the next Chapter he calls *exemplum*, the example or resemblance of that upon the Cross, offered in remem-

remembrance of his Death. Which is sufficient to convince us, that they believed in those days as we do now, and not as the *Roman Church* doth; else He would not have called that, which he says was truly the flesh of Christ, the *heavenly Bread*. But to put all out of doubt, let us turn to the lxxii. Chapter, and there we find these remarkable words out of *St. Austin*, which fully explain the business, *Because it is not lawful for Christ to be devoured by our teeth, therefore our Lord would have this Bread and this Wine in a Mystery, by consecration of the Holy Spirit, to be potentially created his flesh and blood, and to be daily mystically offered for the life of the World.* They are *potentially* then or *virtually* made his Body and Blood, though but Bread and Wine in themselves: *and of this Sacrifice which is thus wonderfully made in Commemoration of Christ,* (as he adds out of *St. Hier.* ch. lxxvi.) *it is lawful to eat; but of that which Christ offered on the Cross, secundum se, according to himself, none can eat.*

But the Canon of the Mass will more abundantly convince us, that he or they that made it did not believe any thing of *Transubstantiation*. For (*First,*) after the Consecration of the Bread and Wine, the Priest signs them *ten* times, at least, with the sign of the Cross: which can have no excuse made for it, (but is the greatest impudence) if it be indeed Christ Himself who lies before the Priest, whom he thus crosses; For sure he doth not intend to bless Christ, or to drive away the Devil from him, or any such like thing, for which those Crossings are used in that Church.

But more than this, (*secondly,*) it is observable that after Consecration also, the Priest still calls Christ's Body, *Panem Sanctum*, the holy Bread

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of eternal Life; which shews that, when this *Rule* was made, they believed the Bread to be still remaining.

A farther indication of which, is, that (3dly) the Priest proceeds to beseech God, that He would vouchsafe to look upon that Sacrifice of *his gifts*, with a propitious and serene countenance; and to accept them as he did the Gift of his *Servant Abel*, and the Sacrifice of *Abraham*, and that which his High Priest *Melchisedeck* offered to him. Which is most absurdly spoken, if the Priest there offer Christ himself unto God; For then he intercedes with him for our intercessor, as if he needed our Prayers: and besides, compares him with the first Fruits of the Flock, and the spoils of War; which is so incongruous, and so much below his heavenly glory, that an unprejudiced Man cannot but think, they who composed that Prayer, looked upon those gifts which they offered, as still Bread and Wine.

Which appears more fully (4thly) from what follows, in the next Prayer, where bowing profoundly, and laying his hands upon the Altar, the Priest humbly intreats God in this manner; *Command these things to be carried by the hands of thy holy Angel, to thy high Altar, into the presence of thy Divine Majesty.* Where there are two plain testimonies against their present Doctrine. For (First) nothing but the Bread and Wine can be called *hæc*, these things; which in no propriety of speech can signify the very natural Body of Christ. Who (secondly) can by none of God's Angels be carried into Heaven, being there already; nor brought more than he is into the presence of the Divine Majesty, where he was before the Priest said Mass, and sits for ever there at God's right hand.

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Had they that composed this Prayer believed any thing of *Transubstantiation*, they would have said, (and could not have said otherways, if they said any thing of this matter) *Almighty God, behold here, before me upon thy Altar, lies thy only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, by my sacrifice unto Thee : that very Christ, who is at thy right hand, I now take into my hands to present unto thy Majesty, under the Form of Bread and Wine. Him thou canst not reject, nor me his Priest, who offer Him unto Thee, &c.* Or some such like Words, more befitting their present Notions, than desiring an Angel may carry what the Priest offers, and present it unto GOD.

But we find quite contrary, which is the *last* thing I shall observe, that in conclusion, the Priest acknowledges, that by Christ Jesus God always *creates, and sanctifies, and quickens, and blesses* (making a Cross upon the Host and the Chalice, at every one of those *three* last words,) *all these good things.* Which can be meant of nothing but the Bread and Wine consecrated to the Commemoration and Representation of Christ's Body and Blood sacrificed for us. For Christ's own very natural Body and Blood cannot in any tolerable sense, be said to be continually created and quickned or made alive : unless you will suppose him to have been dead before, nay, not to have been at all. For *Creation* implies the thing not to have been; and *Vivification*, not to have been then alive, when it was quickned.

Yet this fancy, of *Christ's Real Presence in the Sacrament by Transubstantiation*, against which there are such numerous Testimonies in their own Communion service, is now become the main Article of their Religion. For we all know

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to our great greif and astonishment, that when the publick Authority of this Realm was on their side, subscription was not urged to any Article of their Religion, upon such violent and bloody terms, as unto this of the *Real Presence*. The Mystery of which iniquity, as a great Man of our own said, in the Age before us, cannot be better resolved than into the powerful and deceitful working of Satan; who delights thus to do despite to our Lord, and to his Religion; by seducing his professed Subjects into a belief of such things as make them and Him ridiculous unto Unbelievers; and ingage them in the worst kind of Rebellion he could imagine, by worshipping Bread and Wine instead of their Saviour: and all this upon the least Occasions and shallowest Reasons.

SECT. XIII.

Other Instances of it.

BUT besides these plain confessions of that Church against it self, there are many other things, (which I shall but just name) wherein we have the testimony of severall of their own learned Men (ready to be produced) for our, and against their belief: proving clearly, that the present is not the old Religion of that Church; but that they have brought into it many innovations: by adding to the *Canonical Books of Scripture*; by making their vulgar Latin Translation of the Bible (about which they themselves cannot agree) *authenticall*; by forbidding the People

to read the Holy Scriptures in their own Language; and by denying them the publick Prayers in a Language they understand; by giving the Pope, not only a new Title of universal Bishop, but an Authority and Jurisdiction, which was never heard of for many Ages; by increasing the number of Sacraments, and altering their Nature; by taking away the Cup from the People; and turning the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood into a proper expiatory Sacrifice; by celebrating the Eucharist without any Body to communicate; by setting up Images in Churches, and ordaining Religious Worship to be given them; by invoking Saints and Angels; (as was said before,) and by the Doctrine of Purgatory and Indulgences, and many other; together with a vast number of strange ceremonies in making Holy-Water, consecrating Bells, &c. For which no Antiquity can be pretended.

The woful effect of which is this (if we may speak the plain Truth) that by pressing upon Mens Belief a great deal too much, and placing great virtue in trifles, they have tempted Men to believe nothing at all. As is apparent from hence; that where and when (as an excellent Writer of our own speaks) this Religion hath most absolutely commanded, there and then Atheism or Infidelity hath most abounded. And how should it do otherwise? when as he observes, so many lying Legends have been obtruded upon Mens belief, and so many false Miracles forged to justify them, as are very likely to make suspicious Men question the Truth of all: And so many weak and frivolous ceremonies devised, and such abundance of ridiculous observances in Religion introduced, as are no less apt to beget a secret contempt and scorn of it in witty Men: and

and consequently Atheism and Impiety; if they have this persuasion settled in their mind (which is endeavoured to be rooted in them from their Child-hood) that if they be not of that Religion, they were as good be of none at all. And when a great part also of the Doctrines now mentioned, so apparently make for the temporal ends of those who teach them; that sagacious Men can scarce forbear thinking, they were on purpose devised to serve those designs: That particular Doctrine also of *Transubstantiation* being so portentous, that joyned with the forenamed Persuasion of *no Papists*, *no Christians*, it hath in all probability brought more than *Averroes* to this resolution; *since Christians eat that which they adore, let my Soul be among the Philosophers*: And lastly, the pretence which is so common, that there is no ground to believe the Scriptures, but their Churches infallibility; and yet no ground to believe their Churches infallibility, but some Texts of Scripture; being too plain a way to lead those who discern the labyrinth wherein they are, to believe neither Church nor Scripture.

S E C T. XIV.

Whereby they have spoiled Christianity as the Pagans did the natural Religion.

THESE things, which have been already urged by the Writers of our Church, for the conviction of those who are capable of it, I repeat here again; because they seem to me very
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powerful for the preservation of those, who are not already tainted, or too far gone in that delusion. Which is so great, (that to sum up all belonging to this Head) we may safely say, *Papery* is just such a depravation of the true Christian Religion, as *Paganism* was of the Natural Religion. There cannot be a righter conception of it, than this; which appears too plainly, in the absurd Doctrines and Opinions, which they have mingled with the Christian Faith; in their multiplied Superstitions; in their fabulous Relations of the Saints, wherein they have surpassed the very *Poets* themselves; and (to pass by the rest) in their prostrating themselves before Images: and giving Religious Worship to Men departed.

Which last instance furnished the *Pagans* of *Cochin* with this answer to the Jesuits (as *Chris. Borrus*, one of that Order, relates) when they pressed upon them the belief of one God, and no more. We do believe it, said they; but those whom you see us worship in their Images, were Men of great Sanctity; whom pious People therefore worship according to their merit, just as you give to the Apostles and Martyrs and Confessors divers degrees of honour and religious service, as you know them to have excelled in virtue and piety. And that they might confirm this to be their sense of the Divinity, they bid the Jesuits observe one part of the Altar in their Temple to be void of Images, and to be hid in an obscure and dark place; which, they said, was the proper seat of the most high God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, who could not be represented in any form and shape; and that the Images which stood about that place were the representations

trations of their Intercessors with Him; who having great power with the most high God, did obtain many gifts and blessings for those that invoked them. How this differs from the Notions of the *Roman Church*, I do not see; unless it be in this, that they have sometimes adventured to represent God himself in a shape. Otherwise the worship is the very same (the dead Men, who are the objects of it, only changed) and may very well justify us, if we say, (and therein we speak very moderately) *that their Worship is an Image at least of the ancient Idolatry*. And moves them (to make the resemblance more perfect) unto the very same rage and violence, which was in the Pagans, against all those that differ from them, and cannot consent to worship God in that way: prosecuting them with all manner of cruelty, as if they were utter enemies of God, and of all Religion.

By which we may certainly know that they are so far from being the only true Christians, that they are a very degenerate part of *Christ's Church*: wanting that great mark of his faithful Disciples, *to love one another, even as Christ loved us*. To which they are such strangers, that quite contrary they not only hate and persecute, but endeavour, as I said, to root out those from the face of the Earth, who obediently believe all that they can find our Lord and his Apostles have delivered; and profess they are ready with all their hearts to receive and do whatsoever any Body can farther teach them to be his mind; Nay, are very desirous and diligent to know it; sparing no pains to understand the whole Truth, as it is in Christ Jesus.

SECT. XV.

Answer to what they say about Miracles.

THEY pretend indeed abundance of Miracles wrought in their Church, as a sufficient condemnation of those who obstinately refuse to invoke Saints, to worship their Images and the consecrated Host, to believe Purgatory and all other things, for the proof of which these wonders are alledged. But herein also they imitate the *Pagans*, who were guilty of the like deceit: and the same answer will serve here, which *Grotius* gives there (*L. iv. Sect. 8.*) in his confutation of the old Idolatry. For *First*, the wisest Men among them have rejected many of these Miracles, as not supported by the testimony of any credible witnesses: nay, as plain fictions. Others also of them which are pretended to be of better credit, hapned in some private place, in the night, before one or two persons, whose eyes crafty Priests (as he speaks) might easily delude with false shews and counterfeit appearances of things. And farther there are others which only raise admiration among People Ignorant of the nature of things; and are no true Miracles.

I deny not but there may have things been done among them, which no humane power could effect by the strength of natural causes; and yet no Divine, that is, omnipotent Power be needful to their production. For those Spirits, which are interposed between God and Man, are able by their nimbleness, cunning, activity, and strength

strength to make such strange application of things (very distant) one to another, as shall astonish the Spectators with wonderful effects. But there is too great reason to think they are not good Spirits, that do these feats; because they revive hereby the ancient superstition, or uphold the Image of it still in the Christian World; to the great dishonour of our Saviour, and the endangering the Souls of his People. Who have been so far misled, as not only to fancy great Virtue in the Images of the Saints; and to cry up also some Images, particularly of our Lady of *Loretto* (for instance) as indued with some singular power and virtue, which is not to be found in others: but to honour them so highly, as for one Miracle said to be done by a *Crucifix*, to report a hundred to be wrought at such or such a Shrine of hers.

It is very considerable also (to omit the rest) which he notes, in the V. Book, out of the Law of *Moses*: that it supposes God might permit some wonders to be done, only for their trial; whether the People would persist in the worship of the true God; which had been confirmed by undoubted and far greater and more numerous Miracles. Read *Deuter. xiii. 1, 2, 3. &c.*

This is excellently expressed, and with advantage, by a great Man of our own; in these words, or to this effect. The Doctrine which we believe, that is, the Bible, hath been confirmed, as is confessed on all sides, by innumerable supernatural and truly Divine Miracles; and consequently the Doctrine of the *Roman Church*, which in many points is plainly opposite to the Bible, is condemned by them: I mean the Miracles of Christ and his Apostles. And therefore

if any strange things have been done in that Church, they prove nothing but the Truth of Scripture: which foretold, that (God's Providence permitting it, and the wickedness of the World deserving it) *strange signs and wonders should be wrought to confirm false Doctrine; that they which love not the Truth might be given over to strong delusions.* So that now we have reason rather to suspect and be afraid of pretended Miracles, as signs of false Doctrine; than much to regard them, as certain Arguments of Truth. Neither is it strange that God should permit *some true wonders to be done, to delude those who have forged so many wonders to deceive the World.*

SECT. XVI.

Answer to another Objection.

BUT it is not likely, they say, that Religion should be thus depraved in the *Roman Church*; because their Ancestors were Men of greater Vertue and Honesty, than to suffer the least alteration.

Which is the very thing that is alledged by the *Jews*, why they should not believe our Saviour was unjustly condemned, and his Religion rejected by their Priests and Elders; as *Grotius* observes in the *Vib. Book*. Out of which I might produce several things, as I have done out of the foregoing, to prove the vanity of the *Romish Traditions*, as well as of the *Jewish*; and shew also how they have brought back *Judaism*, in a great measure, by the vast burden of Rites and

and Ceremonies, wherewith they have incumbered Christian Religion: But I shall wave all this (because I would make this Book as short as the rest) and only observe, in answer to what was now pretended; that whosoever shall consider (as he speaks of the Ancestors of the *Jews*) what kind of Men, for several Ages, sat in the Chair of *Rome*, and how ignorant the People generally were; he cannot wonder at the corruption of which we complain.

Let him but read, *First*, the Censures which their own Authors have passed upon several *Popes*, as meer Epicures, and Men void of all Religion, &c. And then the bitter complaints which *St. Bernard* himself makes (and that while he wrote to a Pope) of the vices which were then annexed, even to the very *Papacy*: and farther, the description which such Men, as *Marsilius* of *Padua*, make of the Church of *Rome*, the whole Body of which, he saith, was so infected by the plenitude of Power, which is allowed to the Pope, that it might be more truly called a Shop of Traffick, nay, a Den of Thieves, than a Church of Christ: (and to come nearer to our own times) the forwardness of their People, even since the Reformation, to worship Men as Saints, before they were canonized by the Pope: and he will not think there hath been always such care and caution used about that and such like matters, as they would have us believe.

We have a memorable instance of this thing last mentioned (to meddle with no other) in the Founder of the Jesuits Order, *Ignatius Loyola*: by whose Merits People recommended themselves to God (if we may believe the Pope himself) before he was declared to be a Saint.

So *Urban VIII.* informs us in his very *Bull* or *Decretal Letters* for his Canonization: where several miraculous Works are said to have been done for those, who fled to his help, and religiously worshiped his Image, and commended themselves to him (as the words are) with all their heart. He was made indeed a *Beato* by the preceding Pope: But the like stories are told of *Xavier* one of *Ignatius* his Companions, unto whose Intercession the People applied themselves, and hoped in his merits (as the *Bull* for his Sainting tells us) even before he was made a *Beato*. So exceeding prone they have been of late to run into Superstition; as they were more long ago in the days of *St. Martin*, who broke down an Altar, which had been set up by former Bishops themselves in honour of a Martyr, (as the People called him) who proved to be no better than a *Highway-Man* (as *St. Martin* discovered) that had been executed for his Robberies, and there buried.

SECT. XVII.

Popery and Mahometanism had the same Original.

WE may safely therefore affirm, that the account which *Grotius* gives in the beginning of the VI. Book, of the rise of *Mahometanism*, may serve as well for the Original of *Popery*. Which took its rise from the great decay of true piety; and the vain jangling that fell out among Christian People, by employing their time in curious Questions: which made the
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vulgar at last not know what to believe, and to lay the Fault upon the Scriptures; nay to avoid them as hurtful and dangerous. And then it was easie to lead them any whither, when they had forsaken the light which shewed them their way: and began also to place Religion, not in purity of Mind, but in Rites and Ceremonies; and to content themselves in such things, as served rather to exercise the Body, than to amend the Soul.

In short, that false Prophet *Mahomet*, and an *Universal Bishop* sprang up both together, very near the same time: as *Treason* and *Idolatry* settled themselves also together at the same time in the Age following. For the *Pope*, under the pretence of retaining Images, which the *Constantinopolitan* Emperour destroyed, revolted from him; denied him the Tribute that was wont, till then, to be paid him, even out of *Rome* it self, as well as other places; and denying him all Obedience, plainly thrust him out of *Italy*. This account *Zonaras*, and others give of *Gregory* the II^d's proceeding against *Leo Isaurus*: and thus the *Bishop of Rome*, by his *Papal Authority*, became the first Author of defection from a lawful Prince, upon the account of Religion.

SECT. XVIII.

And supports it self by the same means.

IF we look farther into what was said before about *Mahometanism*, we shall find that *Pope-ry* stands, and upholds it self, by the very same shameful means, which keep up the Religion of that

that false Prophet. By force, that is, and violence: compelling Men where they have any power to consent to what they say, or rather to feign a consent to what they do not believe. Which discovers the weaknets of that Religion, and of the reasons of those that profess it: For he that extorts assent, (as was said in the Book foregoing) by sense of Pain or fear of Punishment; plainly confesses by that very proceeding, that he distrusts his Arguments.

At the best, they require belief of Men without all liberty of enquiring into Religion. For the Vulgar (just as in *Turky*) are prohibited to read the Books which are accounted holy: which is a manifest sign of its iniquity (as he there speaks of the *Turkish* Religion;) for justly may that Merchandize be suspected, which is obtruded upon this condition; that it must not be look'd into nor examined. This is the way of the grossest deceivers; who will not submit themselves to a Trial, and refuse to give any account: but will have us submit to their Authority, and take what such Men as they say upon trust. Which is the method of the *Roman* Church, who are wont to put *doubting of any part of their Doctrine* among mortal sins: And so for fear what the issue may be, will not suffer their People to try their Religion with indifference, that is, with true liberty of Judgment, and with a resolution to doubt of it, if the Grounds of it appear upon examination to be uncertain, and to leave it, if they prove apparently false.

It is true indeed (as it there follows) there is not in every Man the like capacity of knowledge and quick-sightedness to discern between Truth and falsehood: Many also are carried away into

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Error by Pride; others by inordinate Passions or Affections; and some by Custom and Imitation, or by the weakness of their Understandings, and forwardness to judge without due consideration, or advice, with their proper Guides. But those very Books, which the *Roman* Church pretends may mislead Men, (and therefore will not let them use) teach them, in the first and principal place to purge themselves from all naughty affections; and then to be sober-minded, and not too forward to determine things on their own heads; but to reverence their Judgments who are over them in the Lord: and not to pretend to Religion, nor imagine they can judge a-right, till they be humble and meek, and without any other design than this alone, of saving their Souls. Now the Divine Goodness forbids us to think, that such Men shall not be able to find the way to eternal Salvation, who seek for it in God's own Word; and in this manner; without any by-respect to honour or Worldly advantage; and with entire submission of themselves and all they have to Him, imploring his assistance, that they may attain it. Which are in effect the very words of *Justin Martyr* and *Origen*.

And truly, since GOD hath implanted in Mens minds the power and faculty of judging; there is no part of truth that better deserves the employment of this faculty about it, than that of which we cannot be ignorant without hazard of our Salvation. After this, whosoever enquires with a godly mind, he shall not dangerously err: And where should he enquire after it, but in God's most Holy Word? without which we cannot know whether there be either Church or Priest or any thing else, wherein they would have us trust.

SECT.

S E C T. XIX.

And refuses to be tried by Scripture.

IT is a manifest sign therefore of Imposture, that, when they cannot for shame, but sometimes suffer their Religion to be tried, yet they will not have it tried by the holy Scriptures: *In the reading of which* (as was excellently said in the conclusion of the foregoing Books) *no man can be deceived, but he who hath first deceived himself.* For the Writers of them were more faithful, and fuller of Divine Inspiration, than either to defraud us of any necessary part of Divine Truth, or to hide it in a Cloud, so that we cannot see it.

Why then should any body decline this way of trial; unless they see themselves so manifestly condemned by the holy Scriptures, that they dare not let their Cause be brought into so clear a light? Which hurts indeed sore eyes; but comforts and delights those that are sound: shewing us so plainly what we are to embrace, and what to refuse, and being so sure and so perfect a Guide in all such matters; that S. Hilary not only commends and admires the Emperor *Constantius* for desiring a Faith, according to what was written: But saith, *He is an Antichrist who refuses this; and an Anathema that counterfeits it.* And thereupon calls to him in this manner; *O Emperor, thou seekest for Faith; hearken to it, not out of new little Papers, but of the Books of God.* There we must seek for it if we mean to find it: and if they be silent and can tell us nothing (says St. Ambrose) who shall dare to speak?

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Let us not therefore bring deceitful balances (they are the words of *St. Austin*, in his *second Book of Baptism*, Chap. vi.) *wherein we may weigh what we list, and as we list, after our own liking; saying, This is heavy, that is light: But let us bring the Divine Balance out of the Holy Scriptures, (as out of the Lord's Treasures) and in that let us weigh what is most ponderous: or rather, let not us weigh, but acknowledge those things, which are already weighed by the Lord.*

Yes, say they of the Church of *Rome*, we will be put into that Balance, and tryed by the Scriptures; but not by them alone. Which is in effect, to refuse to be tryed by them: for they give testimony to their own fulness, and perfection and plainness too, in things necessary; and so do all other Christian Writers that succeeded the Apostles; who do not send us to turn over we know not how many other Volumes, but tell us here we may be abundantly satisfied. In so much that the first Christian Emperor *Constantine* (the Father of *Constantius* now mentioned) admonished the Bishops in the famous Council of *Nice* to consult with these heavenly inspired Writings, as their Guide and Rule in all their Debates; because *they perspicuously instruct us*, (as his very words are) *what to believe in Divine things; and therefore they ought*, he told them, *to fetch from thence the Resolution of those things, which should come in question.* To which Cardinal *Bellarmino* indeed is pleased to say, that *Constantine* truly was a *Great Emperor, but no great Doctor*: But as herein he speaks too scornfully of him, so he reflects no less upon the Understanding and Judgment of those venerable Fathers assembled in that Council, which

which (as *Theodorēt* tells us in his Ecclesiastical History) was composed of Men excelling in Apostolical Gifts, and many of them carried in their Bodies the Marks of the Lord Jesus, and were, for the far greater part, a multitude of Martyrs assembled together: who all consented unto, and followed this wholesome Counsel of the Emperour: (as he there testifies) knowing he did but speak the sence of the truly Catholick Church.

Which did not merely bid Men hear it, and bring all Doctrines to its Touchstone: but confessed plainly that even the Church it self must be tried by the Scriptures. It is the expresse sentence of the same *St. Austin*, in his Book of the *Unity of the Church*. Where, in the second Chapter, he saith, the Question then was (as now it is) *Where is the Church?* Now what shall we do, says he? Seek for it in our own Words? or in the words of our Head, our Lord Jesus Christ? *I think we ought to seek it rather in his words, who is the Truth and best knows his own Body.* And in the beginning of the third Chapter thus proceeds; *Let us not hear, thus say I, and thus sayest thou: but let us hear, thus saith the Lord.* *The Lord's Books they are certainly; to whose Authority we both consent, we both believe, we both yield obedience: there let us seek the Church; there let us discuss our cause.*

And to name no more, the Author of the imperfect work upon *St. Matthew* (carrying the name of *St. Chrysostome*) declares this so fully, that it leaves no doubt in us what course they took for satisfaction in this business. *Heretofore*, says he, *there were many ways, whereby one might know what was the true Church of Christ, and what was Gentilism: but now there is no way to know*
what

what is the true Church of Christ, but by the Scriptures. Why so? Because all those things which belong properly to Christ in truth and reality; those Heresies have also in shew and appearance. They have Scriptures, Baptism, Eucharist, and all the rest, even Christ himself, like as we have. Therefore if any would know which is the true Church of Christ; how should he know it in such a confusion of multitude, but only by the Scriptures; which he repeats over again a little after, he therefore that would know which is the true Church of Christ, how should he know it but by the Scriptures?

To them let us go, and in them let us rest: and if you are the Disciples of the Gospel, may we say to the Romanists (as Athanasius does to the followers of Apollinarius, in his Book about the Incarnation of Christ) 'Do not speak unrighteously against the Lord, but walk in what is written and done. But if you will talk of different things from what are written, why do you contend with us; who dare not hear nor speak, beside those things which are written? Our Lord telling us, *if you abide in the word, even in my word, you shall be free indeed.* What immodest frenzy is this, to speak things, which are not written? and devise things which are strangers to piety?

To which if we faithfully adhere, there is this to be added for our encouragement; that though we should mistake in the sense of the Scriptures, yet they secure us, that if we with honest and upright hearts continue to inquire after the truth, (designing nothing else) that error shall not prejudice us: But God will either discover to us his mind, or not condemn us for our error of weakness, not of wilfulness.

S E C T. XX.

The Vanity of their appeal to Traditions.

AS for Interpretations of Scripture by Tradition, they may be pretended and talkt of; but cannot be produced in most places, where we are desirous of that help: which we gladly receive, when we can have it by a truly universal consent. But as for particular interpretations of the ancient Fathers, they do not absolutely agree with each other, in their Expositions of those Texts, upon which Controversies of greatest moment are now grounded. Nay, they oft-times propound divers interpretations alike probable. And sometimes plainly intimate their doubtfulness, and make but imperfect conjectures; in such a manner, as if they intended to excite Posterity to seek for farther resolution. Therefore we shall not dissent from them, though we do not assent to all their particular interpretations. Nay, we cannot more dissent from them, than by following their interpretations on such strict terms, as the *Romanists* would bind us all to do; when they seem to make for their advantage. For then, there is not the least surmise or conjecture of any one Father, but must suffice against the joint Authority of all the rest. To which Rule (of serving their interest) they are so true, that they stick not to reject any interpretation of the Fathers, when they think good: and, which is more, to prefer their own expositions before theirs.

And

And so they do in the matter of all other Traditions, though called Apostolical. For instance, the threefold immersion in Baptism, *which seems to have flowed from an Apostolical Canon, is long ago abolished* (saith their *Canus*) *by a contrary custom.* And so is the custom of giving Communion to Infants (which prevailed, says their *Maldonate*, for 600 Years in the Church) not only antiquated by them, but decreed to be unlawful. Which clearly shews that they might, if they pleased, make an end of all the controversies that trouble the Church, without any disparagement (but rather with the increase) of its Authority. For challenging a power to alter even the Institutions of Jesus Christ (as they have done in taking away the Cup from the People in the Holy Communion) and much more those of the Apostles: what need all this stir about Apostolical Traditions, or the Decrees of the Church? which they may lay aside, at their pleasure; and have laid aside, as appears by many other Instances, besides those now named, that may be given of it.

But it is sufficient for the direction of every honest hearted Man to know (which is as certain as any thing of that nature can be, and may be undoubtedly relied on) that nothing is clearer in the Tradition of the Church than this: that the Doctors of it declare the Scriptures to be full and perspicuous in all needful matters. And therefore there needs no other Tradition, but the Tradition of the Scriptures: which satisfie us abundantly, in the Truth of all those things which are universally received.

S E C T. XXI.

And their Guilt in what they say about the Holy Scriptures.

THERE cannot therefore be a greater demonstration of their guilt than this, that notwithstanding such evident Testimonies from the Scriptures themselves, and the concurrent stream of the ancient Doctors of Christ's Church: they have been forced (to avoid this tryal by the Scriptures) to say so many scandalous things as they have done in disparagement of the Sacred Writings. Many of them are commonly known, and I am not willing to repeat the rest: but only say this great Truth; that whether they will or no, their Church, such as it is, receives all its Authority from the Scriptures, and not the Scriptures from it. For we can have no notion, as was said before, of a Church, or of its Authority, but from the Scriptures. Which therefore must be of greater Authority; than that which receives Authority from them, and be first supposed to be infallible, before they can make us believe any thing else is so. For we must be secure of the proof, before we can be sure of the thing proved by it; otherwise it is no proof, but leaves us as much in doubt as we were before it was alledged.

If they say, (and what else can be said with any colour of reason?) that we must indeed learn their Churches Infallibility from the Scriptures; but then learn the rest from their Church: mark, I beseech you, what follows. Then it is manifest, *First*, that they themselves make the Scriptures the Rule of Faith in this one Article, at least, concern-

concerning the Catholick Churches Infallibility. Which we must therefore believe (and for no other reason) because the Scriptures which we first infallibly believe, do teach and prove it.

Whence it plainly follows that private Men may and must be assured of the truth of Scriptures (without the Help of their Churches Authority) before they can believe any thing else: because it is the ground for their belief of that infallibility which their Church pretends, which to them is the General Rule of Faith.

And from thence it follows farther, that the Scriptures, which to us are the only Rule of Faith, ought to be acknowledged by them to be more than so; even the Rule of their Rule of Faith. And if it be so, what reason can any Man alledge, why it should not be the immediate Rule of Faith (without sending us elsewhere to seek it) in all other Articles of the Creed, as well as in that of their pretended infallible Church.

We may appeal to all the World, and call Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men to witnesses, between us and the *Roman Church* (as a worthy Champion of our Cause did long ago) whether the Articles of Christ's Incarnation, his Death, Passion, Burial, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession, the Resurrection of the Dead, and Life everlasting, &c. be not much more plainly set down in the Scriptures, to any Man's apprehension whatsoever; than the intallibility of the present *Roman Church* is, in such words as these, thou art *Peter* &c. *Feed my Sheep*, or any other from whence they challenge it. And therefore why should we be required to learn these or any other part of Christian Faith meerly from their Church, when we learn them so easily by the

Scriptures in which they are to be found more clearly delivered, than any thing we read about their Church?

Let no Man doubt but if the Holy Ghost will teach us that Article of the Churches Infallibility, immediately by the Scriptures, without the help of the Churches infallible Authority, (as they themselves are forced to confess, because else the Church can have no Authority;) then He will immediately teach us, by the same Scriptures, any other Article of our Creed, and whatsoever is necessary to Salvation, which are plainly and perspicuously enough set down in the Scriptures, without the help and assistance of the Churches infallible Authority, which the Scriptures cannot be supposed to teach, but by places far more doubtful.

SECT. XXII.

It is our Wisdom therefore to adhere to the Scriptures.

TO this Rule then let us stick; keeping those words of our Saviour always in mind, *Job. 3. 21, 22. He that doth evil hateth the light; neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.* Let that be his Guide, who would not go astray in dangerous Paths; into which he cannot fall, who keeps close to the directions of the Holy Books: wherein all necessary Truth being set down, as the most ancient and best Doctors unanimously agree, we are certain (every way) by believing them, to believe

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lieve all necessary Truth; and if our lives be accordingly (without which they tell us, our belief will be vain) it is impossible we should fail of everlasting Salvation.

To these alone (as St. *Austin* speaks for himself, in his Book of *Nature and Grace*) we owe an absolute consent, without refusing any thing they propound to us. *Whatsoever it be* (as his words are in his CXII. Epistle) *that is confirmed by the perspicuous authority of the divine Scriptures, those, viz. which are Canonical in the Church; it must be believed without any doubting. But as for any other witnesses or testimonies, to which thou art perswaded to give credit; thou mayest believe them, or not believe them, according as thou perceivest them deserve or not deserve to be relied on.* A great reverence is due to the Church and its Testimony (though less to the present Church of *Rome* than others; because it hath so grossly abused the World by false Records, and forged Miracles, and such like things) yet only as to an humane Testimony; which cannot equal that of the Holy Scriptures.

SECT. XXIII.

Which have more manifest Notes of Certainty than the Church

FOR if we take their own way and method, to assure our Minds that we follow an Infalible Guide, there is no *Note* which they give of the true Church, which they say ought to be our Guide; but pleads far more strongly for the Holy Scriptures, that we should rather follow them, and give and undoubted credit to them. I shall not run over all the *Notes*, nor examine the cer-

tainty of them; but only briefly name some of them, and shew, that if they prove any thing, it is the Authority of the Scriptures above the Church.

First, they say, the very *name of the Catholick Church* is venerable, and ought to be regarded. But, as that Name is not proper to them alone; so, if there be any power in Names to make us respect any thing; what more awful than the Name of the *Word of God*, and the *Sacred Scriptures*, which were always given to these Books, to which we advise all Christians to adhere.

The next Note, which is *Antiquity*, is on the side of the Scriptures also; which more justly claim to be ancients than all other Books, which pretend to any Divinity; than the Catholick Church can claim to be ancients than all other Societies, which call themselves by the Name of a Church. Nay, the Doctrine contained therein, must be supposed, as I have shewn, to be before the Church; which is made by belief and profession of that Doctrine: and the Old Testament certainly written, long before the Church was made Catholick.

As for *Unity*, in that the Church is not comparable to the Scriptures, whose agreement and consent of parts is admirable. And if we speak of the surest bond of true *Catholick Unity*, it is as manifest as the *Sun*, that the *Holy Scriptures* lay the foundation of it, and preserve us in it (if we adhere to them) by keeping us close to *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*: but the Church of Rome, which hath usurped the name of *Catholick*, makes this blessed Unity impossible, For, there being but two ways to it, either that we all agree in our Opinions about Religion, or that while we differ, it be no hindrance to Communion; they

they have made the latter as impossible as the former : because they make it absolutely necessary to Communion and Salvation, to believe in every thing as they do.

The like might be said of *Holiness* and *Efficacy* of Doctrine, (which depends upon the Churches speaking according to the Scriptures) *Sanctity of the Authors* of our Religion, (which cannot be known but out of the Scriptures) the *Glory of Miracles*, the *Light of Prophecy*, and all the rest : but I shall only touch upon one more, the *Amplitude* and *Universality* of the Church, in which they make their boast. But herein the Scriptures most evidently excel ; their Authority being there sacred, where the Church of *Rome* (whose Notes these are) is not known, or not regarded. For all Christians in the World, of whatsoever Sect they be, believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God : whereas they alone say, that they are the only true Church of God. All Christians besides, who know any thing of this pretence of theirs, absolutely deny it ; and maintain the Divinity and Authority of the Scriptures, against all their Cavils.

SECT. XXIV.

The great encouragement we have to do so.

BY following the Scriptures then, we follow the surest Guide, by their own confession. For *first*, by following the Scriptures, we are certainly led by God ; but by following the Church, we are only led by Men. And consequently the Faith we build upon the Scriptures is a *Divine* Faith ;

Faith; but the Faith we build upon the authority of the Church meerly, can be no more than *humane*. For the Scriptures are fully and amply proved to be of Divine Authority, by all those Arguments, which are alledged in the *Third Book* of this Work: the like to which cannot be produced to prove the infallible authority of the Church. Which cannot so much as pretend that God hath bid us believe it, but by sending us to the Holy Scriptures, from whence it derives all its Authority.

Which is the *second* thing to be considered, (and here I will take the liberty to transcribe part of the discourse of a great Man on this Subject, with some Additions) that by following the Scriptures, we follow that which they themselves are forced to follow (as was noted before) and on which they entirely depend, for the proof of their own authority: on which they would have us entirely depend. Who have reason rather to rely on that which they rely: and in so doing tacitly confess the Scriptures are of greatest authority; and that they are surer of their Truth, than of the Churches Infallibility

And *Thirdly*, by following the Scriptures, we follow that which must be true, if their Church (which they would have us follow) have any truth in it; for their Church cannot but give attestation to them: whereas if we follow their Church we must follow that which, though the Scriptures be true, may be false; nay, which, if the Scriptures be true, must be false, because the Scriptures testify against it.

Farther,

Farther, *Fourthly*, to follow the Scriptures, we have God's exprefs Warrant, and Commandment; without any colour for any prohibition: but to believe their Church infallible, we have no Commandment, much lefs any exprefs Commandment; nay, have reason to think, we are prohibited so to do in such words as those, *Beware of false Prophets. Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God, &c.* Which require us to examine before we trust; and consequently not to give up our selves blindfold to those who confidently claim the infallibility of St. *Peter*; but cannot produce any evidence of it.

Again, *Fifthly*, by following the Scriptures, we shall keep to that which was always believed, and every where received: but by following the Church of *Rome*, we shall make our selves guilty of the Changes and Alterations which they have made (as another great Champion of our Church hath observed) *in the Apostolical Creed*, (by making a new one, containing things that hold no conformity with the Apostles) and in the *Apostolical Succession* (by ingrossing the whole Succession to *Rome*, and making other Bishops to be but the *Pope's* Deputies, as to their Jurisdiction) and in the *Apostolical Government* (by erecting a new and universal Monarchy in the Church) and lastly, in the *Apostolical Communion*, by excommunicating the greatest part of the Holy Catholick Church.

By, *Sixthly*, following the *Roman* Church also, we shall be bound to hold many things, not only
above

above Reason, but against it : whereas, by following the Scriptures, we shall only believe some Mysteries, but no Impossibilities ; some things above Reason, but nothing contrary to it. For, though there be things in Scripture, which, had they not been revealed, Reason could not have discovered ; yet there is nothing there, which being revealed, can by true Reason be confuted.

Seventhly, Contrary to Flesh and Blood indeed there are many things contained in the Scriptures ; and therefore by following them we shall believe a Religion, which notwithstanding that great prejudice which Men had to it, prevailed and enlarged it self over the World in a short time ; without any Assistance from worldly Power, Wit, or Policy ; nay, against all these : whereas the *Roman Church* hath got all its Authority over Mens Consciences, by no other means, than by devising false Records, false Miracles and Reports, (as was said before) and by complying with Mens corrupt Affections, or by persecuting those that would not comply ; and by all other such like worldly means, whether of Policy or Force.

Eighthly, To which add, that by following the Scriptures, we shall believe a Religion, whose first Preachers and Professors could have no worldly ends to serve (as hath been demonstrated in the foregoing Books) but rather were to expect, as they every where found, nothing but Disgrace, vile, nay cruel usage, by all manner of Punishments : whereas the Head of the *Roman Church*, it is even palpable, makes their Religion the Instrument of his ambition, and seeks

seeks thereby to entitle himself, directly or indirectly, to the Monarchy of the World: And besides, it is evident to him that hath but half an Eye, as we say, that most of the Doctrines which they have added to the Scriptures, make one way or other for the honour or temporal advantage of the teachers of them.

Ninthly, Again, following the Scriptures, we shall embrace a Religion of admirable simplicity: whereas the *Roman Church* and Doctrine is even loaded with an infinity of weak, childish, unfavory Superstitions and Ceremonies: under which its own Children have groaned and heavily complained.

Tenthly, Those Holy Books also teach us, that we must not promise our selves salvation, unless we effectually mortifie all our evil affections and lusts; and forsaking every sin whatsoever, betake our selves to the practice of all Christian Vertue: But the *Roman Church* opens an easier and broader way to Salvation; permitting at least this to be taught for as good and Catholick Doctrine as any other, that though a Man have continued all his life long in a course of sin, without the practice of any vertue, he may notwithstanding be let into Heaven by an act of Attrition at the hour of Death, if joyned with Confession; or by an act of Contrition without Confession. And therefore in this and several other regards, the Religion of that Church is not so Holy, as the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles delivered in the Scriptures: and consequently is not so likely to come from the Fountain of Holiness and Goodness.

Eleventhly,

Eleventhly, But whatsoever ways they are pleased to devise, to humour Mens depraved appetites, we are sure of this advantage by following the Scriptures, which they cannot pretend to by following their Church. That if we happen to entertain an erroneous opinion, grounded, as we think, upon some place of Scripture, it is implicitly retracted and condemned, by our precedent full and intire assent to all things contained in the Scriptures; and our general resolution to hold nothing contrary to them, nor admit any thing (as necessary to Salvation) that cannot be proved by them. Which makes the Error that we unwittingly and unwillingly hold against the Scriptures, less dangerous: because our adherence to the Scriptures is nearer, closer, and firmer, than it is to our particular Error. Whereas by following their Church, not knowing what it is (whether the whole Body of People in that Communion, or a General Council, or the *Pope*, in, or out of a Council) we shall have no such Excuse for our Errors: but they will be rather much aggravated, by our adhering so strictly to a doubtful and uncertain Rule; unto which the People in that Communion sticking closer than they do to the Word of God, it lessens the value of all the Truths which they believe, and doubles the guilt of all their Errors.

And, *Lastly*, as this is a great satisfaction to our selves, so there is this to be added for the Comfort of others also: That by following the Scriptures, we shall learn to bear with one another in our different opinions, about things which cannot thereby be determined; nay, in things which

which are not directly against it, or wherein we are not yet sufficiently instructed: But by following the *Roman Church* we shall be taught to pass the heaviest sentences upon all those that believe not in all things as we do; nay, to take the severest courses with them, though they be Men of the most innocent and useful lives; conforming themselves in all things to the Precepts of Christ Jesus, and to the Authority of their Governours for his sake, where it doth not manifestly contradict Him.

To conclude this, we, for our parts, are of the same mind, even towards them, which *Grotius* before observed the Apostles were of towards the *Jews*: *From whom*, saith he (and let the words be taken, as if spoken by us, to those of the *Roman Communion*) *they would not so much as exact an acknowledgment of their happiness, in being delivered from the heavy Yoke of Rites and Ceremonies that lay upon them; But, if they would admit of the Commandments of Christ, which are full of all goodness, easily permitted them to follow what course of life they pleased in matters of indifference; provided they would not impose the necessity of observing them upon others.*

S E C T. XXV.

Conclusion of all.

UPON these terms we are ready to agree with them; and I conclude all with this memorable Proposal, which *Erasmus* made in a Letter to *Johannes Slechta*, a Friend of his in *Bohemia*,

Bohemia, at the very beginning of the Reformation, MDXIX.

This would reconcile People to the Church of Rome, if all things were not so particularly defined, and made a matter of Faith, which we would have to belong to it: but those only which are evidently expressed in the Holy Scriptures; or without which we do not see any way to be saved.

To this purpose a few things are sufficient; and a few things may be sooner perswaded than a great many.

Now out of one Article we make Six Hundred: some of which are such, that without endangering Pcity, we may either be ignorant, or doubt of them. And, such is the nature of Mankind, that what is once defined, we hold tooth and nail, and will by no means part with it.

But when all's done, the summ of Christian Philosophy lies in this; That we understand all our Hope to be placed in God, who freely gives us all things by his Son Jesus; by whose death we are redeemed, into whose Body we are planted by Baptism; that being dead to the Lust of this World, we may live according to his Doctrine and Example; not only abstaining from all evil, but endeavouring to deserve well of every Body: and that if any adversity happen, we bear it courageously, in hope of a future Reward; which, without all doubt, waits for all pious Persons at the coming of Christ: and that we make such progress from vertue to vertue; as notwithstanding to arrogate nothing to our selves, but to ascribe all the good that is in us, or that we can do, unto GOD.

These things chiefly are to be inculcated, and beaten into the minds of Men; so that they become as
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it were, their Nature. But if any will search into those things which are more abstruse, about the Divine Nature, the Hypostasis of Christ, or the Sacraments, that they may raise their minds the higher, and draw them from things here below, let them do so provided that every Body be not compelled presently to believe what seems good to this or that Person.

For as out of large deeds arise sooner Law suits; so are differences begotten, by very many definitions.

And let us not be ashamed to answer to some things, God knows how it may be done, it is sufficient for me to believe that it is done.

I know that Christ's pure Body and Blood is to be purely received by those that are pure; and that He would have this to be a most holy Token and Pledge, both of his Love to us, and of our Christian Concord among our selves. And therefore I will examine my self, and make a strict search; whether there be any thing in me that ill agrees with Christ, whether any discord with my Neighbour.

But how the Ten Predicaments are there, how the Bread is Transubstantiated by the Mystical Words, (or, as He explains himself in the latter end of his Book upon lxxxiv. Psal.) how the Body of Christ is there, whether under the Substance of Bread, or under the species of Bread and Wine, and such like; doth not much conduce, in my Judgment, to proficiency in Piety, &c.

By these, and other such innumerable Disputations, in which some triumph; the Minds of Men are called away from those things, which alone are to the purpose.

To conclude, it will be of great moment to establish the concord of the World; if all secular Princes and especially the Bishop of Rome, would abstain from all appearance of Tyranny and of Covetousness.

For

For Men easily start back, when they see Slavery is prepared for them; when they see they are not invited to Piety, but inveigled to be made a prey.

If they perceive us to be harmless, to be beneficent; they will most easily credit us, and intrust themselves with us. Thus He.

It would not be very hard to make a longer Book on this Subject: but this is sufficient (as *Grotius* speaks in the beginning of this Discourse, about the *Truth of Christian Religion*) to convince those whose Understandings are rightly disposed, and are not pertinaciously set against all farther information. But no Arguments can be found of force enough to convince a froward Will, and persuade perverse Affections: which make Men incapable of Moral Truth, most of all of Divine. *Which will not enter (as the wise Man speaks) into a malicious Soul; nor dwell in the Body that is subject unto sin. For the Holy Spirit of Discipline will flee Deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in.*

THE END.

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